This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

Hosted by Google

Anti-Bacchus: an Essay on the Crimes, Diseases, and other Evils connected with the Use of Intoxicating Drinks. By Rev. B. Parsons. Fourteenth Thousand, 8vo., sewed, 2*s*.

"We conjure our readers to give this volume an attentive, candid perusal, from a decided conviction that, in proportion as its circulation is promoted, and its contents are impartially read, will be stayed one of the most dreadful evils that ever afflicted the human race."—*Methodist New-Connexion Magazine.*

The Wine Question Settled, in accordance with the Inductions of Science and the Facts of History; in which particular Reference is made to the Character of ancient Drinks, especially the Wines of Scripture. By the same Author. 12mo., sewed, 1*s*. 6*d*.

Now ready, Second Edition, in 16mo., price 4*d*.,

A Manual Explanatory of Congregational Principles. By Rev. George Payne, LL.D.

This day is published, 18mo., cloth, price 1*s*. 6*d*.,

Our Age and Our Country. Thoughts on the Past, the Present, and the Probable Future of England and the World, suggested by the Great Exhibition of the Arts and Industry of all Nations in 1851. By Rev. A. E. Pearce.

The Constitution of Apostolical Churches; or, Outlines of Congregationalism; with Two Addresses suited to the Times. By Rev. J. S. Pearsall. *Second Edition*, 12mo., cloth, 2*s*. 6*d*.

Apollos; or, the Scholar doing Homage to Divine Revelation. By the same Author. Price 6*d*., or 5*s*. per dozen.

Faith and Order. Hints to Candidates for Church Fellowship. By the same Author. Price 3*d*.; gilt edges, 4*d*.

The Life, Times, and Missionary Enterprises in South Africa, and the British Isles, of the Rev. John Campbell; written chiefly by Himself. With Specimens of his Correspondence with the Countess of Leven, Sir Walter Scott, John Newton, Scott the Commentator, &c. &c. By Robert Philip. Post 8vo., with Portrait, cloth, 10*s*.

Life of the Rev. William Milne, D.D., Missionary to China. With Biographical Annals of Asiatic Missions from Primitive to Protestant Times; intended as a Guide to Missionary Spirit. By the same Author. Post 8vo., cloth, with Portraits of Dr. and Mrs Milne. 7*s*. 6*d*.

Jamaica; its Past and Present State. By Rev. James M. Phillippo, Twenty Years a Missionary in that Island. Third Thousand, post 8vo., cloth, with many Engravings, 8*s*. 6*d*.

"A volume of enchanting interest, which equals those of Williams and Moffat, presenting a most instructive and entertaining view of the state of society in Jamaica, and written in a spirit which inspires implicit confidence in the narrator."—*Patriot.*

The Missionary's Reward; or, the Success of the Gospel in the Pacific. By Geo. Pritchard, Esq., Her Britannic Majesty's Consul at the Navigators' Islands, South Seas. With an Introduction by the Rev. John Angell James. Second Thousand, beautifully illustrated, foolscap 8vo., cloth, 4*s*.

Procrastination; or, the Vicar's Daughter. A Tale. Third Edition, with Frontispiece, foolscap 8vo., elegantly bound, 3*s*. 6*d*.

"The *Third Edition* of a deeply-interesting volume, which should be read by every young lady throughout the kingdom."

"We are not surprised that the Third Edition of this work has been required. Such are its excellences, that its real character can only require to be known to obtain for it a very extensive circulation. It most felicitously describes the evils of a disposition to procrastinate, putting off from time to time the momentous duty of giving unreservedly the heart to God, and making an open avowal of discipleship to Christ."—*Wesleyan Association Magazine.*

Hosted by Google

Memoirs of the Life of Rev. John Williams, Missionary to Polynesia. Compiled from his Journals, Correspondence, and other Authentic Sources. By Rev. E. PROUT. One handsome volume 8vo., cloth lettered, with Portrait, &c., 12s.

———— **Cheap Edition,** uniform with "WILLIAMS'S MISSIONARY ENTERPRISES." Royal 8vo., sewed 3s.; cloth 4s.

Wild Flowers; or, Poetic Gleanings from Natural Objects, and Topics of Religious, Moral, and Philanthropic Interest. By Miss C. S. PYER. Foolscap 8vo., cloth, 4s.

Songs of Freedom, for the School and Play-ground. Adapted to Popular Airs, and designed to inspire our Rising Youth with a Love of Civil and Religious Liberty. By the Author of "Wild Flowers." Square 16mo., sewed, 1s.

Masters and Committees of British, Congregational, and Ragged Schools, will find these Songs well fitted to aid the instruction they respectively impart.

Religious Life in the Established Church. In Twelve Letters, addressed to Pious Episcopalians. By a FRIEND. With a Prefatory Address to the Hon. and Rev. Baptist Noel, M.A. Foolscap 8vo., cloth, 2s. 6d.

This day is published, 8vo., sewed, price 1s.,

The Moral Conflict. A Sermon, preached before the London Missionary Society, at the Tabernacle, on Wednesday Evening, May 14th, 1851. By Rev. DAVID REES.

Lessons of Life and Death; a Memorial of SARAH BALL. By ELIZABETH RITCHIE. Second Edition, cloth, 2s.; silk, 3s.

"A beautiful narrative, to which we would earnestly invite the attention of our youthful readers."—*Christian Examiner.*

Lectures on the Book of Revelation. By Rev. GEORGE ROGERS. Vols. I. to IV., 12mo., cloth, 5s. each.

Mamma's Lessons on the History and Geography of Palestine, and other Places mentioned in the Bible. In Simple and Familiar Conversation. By ANNE MARIA SARGEANT. Square foolscap 8vo., cloth, with Map and Illustrations, 2s. 6d.

"A beautiful introduction to the Bible. No child can read it without being better prepared to understand the Scriptures. While the gifted writer does not forget that salvation is the great subject of the Bible, her book is full of facts, taken from history and Eastern customs, which explain many parts of God's Word. It is an excellent Sunday book for the young."—*Juvenile Missionary Magazine.*

A Word in Season; being a Faithful and Affectionate Address to Young People, on leaving Sabbath and other Schools connected with Places of Worship. By the same Author. 18mo., cloth, 1s.

This day is published, 8vo., cloth, price 12s.,

Sermons. By Rev. GEORGE SMITH, of Poplar.

The Protestant Reformation: a Lecture. By the same Author. The Second and Cheap Edition. 3d.

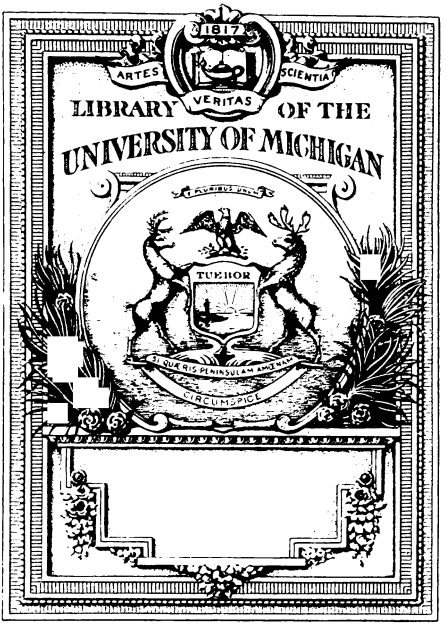
"One of the most vivid and telling essays on the great subject of which it treats, within so small a compass, in our language."—*Evangelical Magazine.*

The Tractarian Heresy; a Voice from Oxford. Tradition: or, the Rule of Religious Belief—The Doctrine of the Holy Catholic Church—The Christian Ministry; or, Apostolic Succession—The Efficacy of the Sacraments—Auricular Confession and Priestly Absolution—The Character and Tendency of Tractarianism. By Rev. J. SPENCE, M.A. Foolscap 8vo., cloth, 3s.

"It contains a calm, courteous, and masterly review, and, we think, an unanswerable refutation of all the dogmas of the Tractarian School."—*Oxford Chronicle.*

Hosted by Google

BX
7117
R66



Hosted by Google

THE

WORKS

OF

JOHN ROBINSON,

PASTOR OF THE PILGRIM FATHERS.

WITH

A MEMOIR AND ANNOTATIONS

BY

ROBERT ASHTON,

SECRETARY OF THE CONGREGATIONAL BOARD, LONDON.

VOLUME III.

LONDON:

JOHN SNOW, 35, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1851.

Hosted by Google

REED AND PARDON,

PRINTERS,

LOVEL'S COURT, PATERNOSTER ROW.

Hosted by Google

CONTENTS OF VOL. III.

PAGE

A Just and Necessary Apology :—
Prefatory Notice and Contents 1
Chapters I.—XII. 4

Two Letters on Christian Fellowship, between Dr. Ames and Mr. Robinson 81

On Religious Communion, Private and Public :—
Notice—Contents 91
Preface 95
Chapters I.—VI. 104

The People's Plea for the Exercise of Prophecy :—
Notice and Preface 280
An Answer to the Arguments of Mr. John Yates . . 288

A Treatise on the Lawfulness of Hearing Ministers in the Church of England :—
Editorial Notice 339
The Printers to the Christian Reader 343
The Lawfulness of Hearing, &c. 352

A Letter to the Congregational Church in London . . . 379

An Appeal in Truth's Behalf 387

An Answer to a Censorious Epistle :—
Editorial Notice. 395
Answer to Rev. Joseph (Bishop) Hall's Letter . . . 401

A Catechism ; being an Appendix to Rev. W. Perkins's Foundation of the Christian Religion 421

Hosted by Google

PAGE

Appendix. No. I.:—
The Church in Southwark, by Rev. John Waddington . 437

Appendix. No. II.:—
The Exiles, and their Churches in Holland:—
The Church in Holland 455
Notice of Rev. Robert Browne 457
The Church at Amsterdam 459
Notice of Rev. H. Ainsworth 462
Notice of Rev. R. Clyfton 465
Letters between Churches of Leyden and Amsterdam . 467
Mr. Robinson's Letter on Church Power 475
The Principles and Regulations of the Churches at Amsterdam, Leyden, New Plymouth 485
Chronological Index 493
Indexes:—
Subjects 494
Authors 508
Scriptures 514

Hosted by Google

A

JUST AND NECESSARY APOLOGY

OF

CERTAIN CHRISTIANS,

NO LESS CONTUMELIOUSLY THAN COMMONLY CALLED

BROWNISTS OR BARROWISTS.

By MR. JOHN ROBINSON,

PASTOR OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH AT LEYDEN.

FIRST PUBLISHED IN LATIN, IN HIS AND THE CHURCH'S NAME OVER WHICH HE WAS SET,

AFTER TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH BY HIMSELF,

AND NOW REPUBLISHED FOR THE SPECIAL AND COMMON GOOD OF OUR OWN COUNTRYMEN.

"O blessed is he that prudently attendeth to the poor weakling."
PSALM xli. 2.

PRINTED IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1625.

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google

PREFATORY NOTICE.

THE "Apology" was published originally in Latin, under the title of "Apologia justa et necessaria quorundam Christianorum, æque contumeliose ac communiter dictorum Brownistarum sive Barrowistarum, per JOHANNEM ROBINSONUM, Anglo-Leidenensem, suo et Ecclesia nomine, cui præficitur Psal. xli. 2, Beatus, qui attendit ad attenuatum, Anno Domini 1619." It was subsequently translated into English, by Mr. Robinson himself, for more general circulation among the English, both in his native land and in the United Provinces. In no edition, either of the Latin or English, has a preface been found. The "Apology" was intended to justify the occasional intercommunion between the members of Mr. Robinson's church and those of the Belgian churches, and also to exhibit the peculiar opinions and practices of the Separatists, in distinction from those of the churches around them. The Independents were calumniously reported to have repudiated baptism, abandoned an "Ecclesiastical Ministrye," departed from the faith respecting the "Very Trinitie," and conducted themselves so obnoxiously to the magistrates, as to render it necessary that they should seek "some farr parte of the world to settle in." They were also charged with conspiring to undermine the established religion in the land of their exile. These calumnies are refuted rather by implication than argument. The work contains a clear and manly statement of the religious principles and proceedings of the Independents of that day, between whom and the modern Congregationalists there appear to be some shades of difference in ecclesiastical arrangements and usages; but in all essential principles they are manifestly one.

The work may be read with equal interest and profit by the descendants of the pilgrim fathers, as by their venerable predecessors.

Hosted by Google

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

CHAP.

INTRODUCTION.

I. Of the Largeness of Churches.

II. Of the Administration of Baptism.

III. Of Written Liturgies.

IV. Of the Ecclesiastical Presbytery.

V. Of Holy Days.

VI. Of the Celebration of Marriage by the Pastors of the Church.

VII. Of the Sanctification of the Lord's Day.

VIII. Of the Exercise of Prophecy.

IX. Of Temples.

X. Of Things Indifferent.

XI. Of Civil Magistrates.

XII. Of the Church of England.

Hosted by Google

A

JUST AND NECESSARY APOLOGY.

"THE crime of heresy none ought patiently to endure," said Jerome of old;* and that not without cause, for whereas in other accusations, either a man's goods, or good name, or bodily life, at the most, is endangered; in this, the life of the soul, which faith is, cometh in question.

But well it is for the servants of Jesus Christ, that they have him, their gracious Lord and Saviour, for their Judge, by whose alone judgment, notwithstanding all men's prejudices, they shall stand or fall for ever. And, if any others anywhere, surely I, and they with me, have need to get this divine comfort deeply printed in our hearts; whose profession gives occasion to many, as doth our condition liberty unto all, to spare no severity of censure upon us.

Four sorts of heavy friends we have found and felt, in sorrowful experience, wheresoever we have become. The first whereof is the unhallowed multitude, who living without God in the world; and walking themselves perversely, and in the works of darkness, John iii. 19, cannot but hate, as the light itself, so all those, who have received grace of God, to walk therein with good conscience. And as the apostles, in their days, were everywhere most vexed with the hatred of the unbelieving Jews, their own countrymen; so are we by the like of ours like-minded. Of whom whilst the most do want their country for causes so unlike unto

* Hieron. ad Pamach.

Hosted by Google

ours, no marvel though there be no better concurrence of either affection or action between us.

The second is of them, who are enamoured on that Romish hierarchy, as on a stately and potent lady. Against which, and for the holy presbyterial government, as Christ's institution by his apostles, whilst we do in word and deed, give a free and full testimony; alas! with how many, and how great waves of affliction, are we overwhelmed by their hatred and power! Demetrius of Ephesus, with his silversmiths, was of all other men, to the apostle Paul, opposing himself to the majesty of Diana, and their profit withal, the most infestuous.* And who will marvel, if we nothing obsequious to the hierarchical Diana, in herself, magnificent enough, and enough advantageable unto hers, be abominable unto this kind of people, above all others, even atheists, papists and most flagitious persons not excepted, whom they have devout enough and over, unto that goddess.

A third kind is of those, who so servilely inbondage themselves, and their consciences, either to the edicts of princes, or to the determinations of certain doctors, or to both these jointly; as that they think nothing well done in case of religion, which either these teach not, or they command not: and on the other side, almost anything warrantable, which is commended by the one of them, or commanded by the other. And as of these some are so transported with waspish zeal, as they can scarcely without a fit of an ague, either speak to, or think of him, who a little steps out of their troad;† so others of them are so cunning, and wot so well how to make their market, that though they be indeed almost like-minded with us in all things, yet do they vehemently affect unchristian enmity with us: not because they themselves judge us so deserving; but others, whom therein they think it a point of their wisdom to gratify.

The fourth, and last sort are they, who, through credulity and lightness of belief, have their ears open to the false and feigned suggestions of slanderous tongues. These men whilst they are over good and easy towards the evil and injurious, unto whom they give credence, become injurious

* Troublesome. † Tread or footsteps.

Hosted by Google

themselves to the good and innocent: though, in truth, it be hard to say, unto which of three they do the greatest wrong: whether to their brethren, of whom they causelessly conceive amiss, whilst either they greedily devour, or easily receive such false reports, and vituperies, as venomous tongues spit out against them: or to their own souls, which they thereby make accessory to others' malice: or to the calumniators themselves, whom they put in heart to go boldly on in reproaching the innocent, whilst they know, where to find receivers for their slanders, as do thieves for their stolen goods.

Now, alas, what sufficient bulwark of defence have we (poor people) to oppose unto the violence of so many, and mighty adversaries? First, and most, as a brazen wall, our conscience before God, and men (so far as human frailty will permit) pure, and unstained. Next, thine equanimity joined with wisdom, godly and Christian reader, for whose cause we have penned and published this our just and necessary defence: lest being circumvented by prejudice, thou mayest happen "to hate that whereof thou art ignorant:" than which nothing in Tertullian's judgment, "is more unjust, no not though the thing in itself justly deserve hatred."* By this we do earnestly crave, that, as thou safely mayest, so thou wilt ingenuously pass sentence upon us and our profession, and not by the unsavoury reports, either in word or writing, of our adversaries whomsoever: who do most commonly take liberty to suggest against us (underlings), not what in truth and conscience they should, but what either fame reporteth, or ignorance suspecteth, or malice inventeth, or proud contempt deems suiting with our meanness and simplicity.

Two opprobries (amongst others infinite) have been of late by our adversaries cast upon us; by which we are not only occasioned, but after a sort necessitated to the publishing of this our Apology: lest by not refuting such criminations, "so great and grievous," we should seem to acknowledge a crime, as Cyprian speaketh.† The former, by some of those, who in our own country, are reputed the chief masters and patrons both of religion and truth; by whom there hath been, not a flying bruit‡ spread amongst

* Tertul. Apol. advers. Gentes. † Cypr. tract. cont. Demet.
‡ Report.

Hosted by Google

the multitude, but a solemn accusation to them in special authority, framed against us: First, that we (lewd Brownists) do refuse, and reject one of the sacraments: secondly, that we have amongst us no ecclesiastical ministry, but do give liberty to every mechanical person to preach publicly in the church. Thirdly, that we are in error about the very Trinity. Fourthly and lastly, that being become so odious to the magistrates here, as that we are by violence to be driven the country, we are now constrained to seek some other, and far part of the world to settle in.

The other contumely is in a Dutch rhyme without name, framed it may be, and as commonly it comes to pass, "between the cup and the wall," as saith the proverb. This ballad-maker comparing the received religion in the Dutch churches to a tree: the sectaries in the country, of which he nameth not a few, to certain beasts endeavouring this tree's ruin, and overthrow, likens the Brownists to a little worm, gnawing at the root thereof; and not having less will, but less power to hurt, than the residue. We are indeed worms and not men, the reproach of men, and despised of the people, Psalm xxii. 6, whom high and low, and all that will, may, without danger, tread and trample under foot.

But to give thee satisfaction, Christian and indifferent reader, whosoever thou art, that choosest rather to take knowledge of men's innocency, than to condemn the same unknown; and that it may appear unto thee, how alike unhonest our adversaries are in their accusations, though of unlike condition in themselves, we do profess before God and men, that such is our accord in the case of religion, with the Dutch reformed churches, as that we are ready to subscribe to all and every article of faith in the same church, as they are laid down in the Harmony of Confessions of Faith, published in their name: and one only particle (and the same not of the greatest weight) in the sixth article, touching the Scriptures, being conveniently interpreted, and conformably to itself, and the general judgment of the learned amongst them.

The scope of the article is, as appears in the margin, to distinguish between the books canonical and apocryphal, as they are called. Touching which apocryphal notwith-

Hosted by Google

standing it is judged, and affirmed, that they may be read in the church. Which if it be meant of their private reading by the members of the church, we willingly assent: if of public, pastoral, and ecclesiastical reading, we are indeed otherwise minded: neither admit we any other books to that dignity in the church, than such as were penned by the "holy men of God, moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Pet. i. 21. And as the apostle James testified of the Jews, that "they had Moses read in the synagogue every Sabbath day," Acts xv. 21: so we think it sufficient for the Christian assemblies, that with Moses, Christ, that is, the books of the New Testament be joined with the Old, and they alone be read.

Neither need we seek further, or for other arguments to confirm our opinion, than the article itself affordeth us. The words thereof are these:—

Moreover, we put a difference between the holy writings and those which they call apocryphal, to wit, so as the apocryphal may indeed be read in the church, and that it may be lawful to take instructions from them, so far forth as they agree with the canonical books: but such at no hand is their authority, or firmness, that upon their testimony any doctrine of faith and Christian religion may be founded, much less that they have force to infringe or weaken the others' authority.*

And first, If the apocryphal books be publicly read in the church, as well as the canonical, the difference which in word is professed, seems indeed by this so reading them, to be taken away: since the selfsame religious act, viz. public reading, is performed about the one and other, although not altogether to the same end. And if public reading of the canonical Scriptures be commanded of God in his worship, either the reading of these apocryphal books is a part of God's worship also, (which the Belgic churches do not believe) or else they must be unlawful to be read publicly in the church, especially coming together for that only end of worshipping God. Publicly, I say; for the private reading of them, as of other books, comes not under the respect of worship properly, but of an act and

* Harmony of Confess. Art. 6, of the Script. Conf. Belg., p. 11. New Edition. By Rev. Peter Hall, M.A.

Hosted by Google

exercise preparative unto worship, as both lawyers and divines speak.

Secondly, In this very article, the canonical books, as opposed to the apocryphal, are called holy writings. The apocryphal then are not holy, as not being hallowed to this end, that is not commanded of God in the holy writings of the prophets and apostles. Now what have the holy assemblies to do, especially convening, and meeting together for the solemn worship of God, and exercising themselves in the same, with books not holy, that is, not hallowed, or enjoined of God, for his most holy service?

Thirdly, Seeing these books are apocryphal, that is, hidden and concealed, their very name may put them in mind of their duty in concealing themselves within the vail of privacy. And surely no small immodesty it is in them, which ought to contain themselves in private use and entertainment, thus boldly to press into public assembly. They must therefore change either their names or their manners; as women by their sex, so they by their name, well expressing their nature, are inhibited all liberty of speaking in the church.

I add, and conclude out of our countryman Hugh Broughton,* that those apocryphal books are so stuffed with trifles, fables, lies, and superstitions of all sorts, that the middle place between the Old and New Testament, as ill becomes them, as it would do a Turkish slave, and leper, between two the noblest princes of all Europe.

But to return whence I digressed. Seeing that, as appears in the Preface, the intention of the Belgic churches was, as in divulging their confession, to render a reason of the hope which is in them, and plainly to make known their persuasion in the matter of faith; so also in publishing the Harmony of Confessions, to give all men to understand, and take knowledge of that most near conjunction which they have with the sacred and truly catholic church of God, and all the holy and sound members thereof:† by what right, or rather injury, could we be excluded from the fellowship of the same churches, who do far better accord, and have greater congruity with them in the matter of faith

* Works, 1652, p. 657.

† Preface to the Harm. of Confess., p. 31. Hall's Edition.

Hosted by Google

and religion, than the greatest part of those, whose confessions they do publish to the view of all men, as the cognisance and badges of their Christian consociation? And with what conscience of a Christian, or rather licentiousness of a rhymer, could that adversary traduce us to the world, as endeavouring the ruin of the reformed churches?

But, perhaps, that which may be, is suspected to be by some, which also the false accuser doth insinuate in his libel against us, and that, what in word we profess, we deny in deed; and what we would seem to build with our tongues, we do, as it were, with our hands pull down. If so it be, and that indeed we be found to be such, I do freely confess, that no censure upon us can be too severe, no hatred more grievous than we do deserve.

Now the guilt of this evil must cleave unto our fingers, if at all, one of these two ways, either in regard of ourselves, or of the reformed churches. For ourselves, and our course of life, for necessity compelleth, as it were foolishly to babble out that, wherein modesty persuadeth silence, and how we converse with God, and men, whether publicly in the church, or privately in the family, we refuse not, by the grace of God bestowed upon frail creatures, labouring of the same human infirmities with other men, the search and censure of our most bitter adversaries, if not destitute of all, both honesty and wisdom.

Touching the reformed churches, what more shall I say? We account them the true churches of Jesus Christ, and both profess and practise communion with them in the holy things of God, what in us lieth; their sermons such of ours frequent, as understand the Dutch tongue; the sacraments we do administer unto their known members, if by occasion any of them be present with us; their distractions, and other evils we do seriously bewail, and do desire from the Lord their holy and firm peace.

But haply, it will be objected, that we are not like-minded with them in all things, nor do approve of sundry practices in use amongst them, if not by public institution, which it seems they want, yet by almost universal consent, and uniform custom. I grant it; neither doubt I, but that there are many godly, and prudent men in the same

Hosted by Google

churches, who also dislike in effect the things which we do: and amongst other things, this malapert and unbridled boldness of unskilful men, who make it a very May-game to pass most rash censure upon the faith, and so by consequence, upon the eternal salvation of their brethren, and to impeach their credit, whom they neither do, nor perhaps willingly would know: lest that which they lust to condemn unknown, they should be constrained to allow, if they once knew it: and withal to disallow that, into which they themselves have been led formerly by common error of the times. Which malady is also so frequent, and ordinary, as that it may truly be said of many, that they then think themselves most acceptable unto God, when they can make their brethren, differing from them in some smaller matters, most odious unto men. This raging plague except the Lord God in mercy assuage, and bend the minds of godly, and modest men, the ministers of his Word, to put to their helping hand that way, it will without all doubt, come to pass, which God forbid, that the multitude of Christians will come to judge of their estate with the Lord, not so much by the Christian virtues, which themselves indeed have, as which they imagine others want.

But that it may appear unto thee, Christian reader, wherein we do dissent from the Dutch reformed churches, and upon what grounds: and that none may take occasion of suspicion, that the things are either greater, or more absurd, for which those hateful Brownists are had by many in such detestation, than indeed and truth they are, I will briefly, as I can, present unto thy Christian view either all, or the most, and our greatest differences, with the grounds thereof.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE LARGENESS OF CHURCHES.

And first, it is evident, that the most, especially city churches, are so great and populous, as that two or three divers temples are not sufficient for one and the same church to meet in at once. We on the contrary, so judge, that no particular church under the New Testament, ought

Hosted by Google

to consist of more members than can meet together in one place; because,

1. The Holy Scriptures speaking definitely of the political, or ministerial, commonly called, visible church, instituted by Christ, and his apostles, by his power, understand none other than one congregation convening, and coming together, ordinary at least, in one place. Matt. xviii. 17, 20, "gathered together in my name:" with 1 Cor. v. 4, "when you are come together." Acts ii. 44, "All that believed were together:" and chap. v. 12, "They were all with one accord in Solomon's porch." Also chap. vi. 2, 5; xiii. 1, 2; xiv. 23, 27; xv. 4, 22, 25; Titus i. 5. So 1 Cor. xi. 20, "When ye therefore come together in one," to wit, place, not mind, as some conceit, for from that the Corinthians were too far: and lastly, chap. xiv. 23, "If the whole church come together into some place."

2. There is then had the most full, and perfect communion of the body in the holy things of God, which is the next and immediate end of the visible church, when all the members thereof do convene, and assemble together in some one place, Acts ii. 42; Heb. x. 25. And if nature, as philosophers teach, ever intend that which is most perfect, much more, grace. Now that the church, commonly called visible, is then most truly visible indeed, when it is assembled in one place; and the communion thereof then most full, and entire, when all its members inspired, as it were, with the same presence of the Holy Ghost, do from the same pastor, receive the same provocations of grace, at the same time, and in the same place: when they all by the same voice, "banding as it were together,"* do with one accord pour out their prayers unto God: when they all participate of one, and the same holy bread, 1 Cor. x. 17; and lastly, when they all together consent unanimously, either in the choice of the same officer, or censuring of the same offender, no man admitting a due thought of things, can make doubt of.

3. We have the apostle Paul giving it in charge to the elders of every particular church, as was that of Ephesus, "that they take heed unto all the flock, whereof the Holy Ghost made them bishops," or overseers, "to feed the

* Tertul. Apol. cap. 38.

Hosted by Google

church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Acts xx. 17, 28. But surely, as that flock is very inordinate, if not monstrous, which for the largeness thereof, neither ever doth, nor possibly can feed together; so that shepherd of the Lord's flock seemeth not aright, and as he ought, to fulfil his charge, which doth not at the least, every Lord's day, minister unto the same, the wholesome food of God's Word. Add hereunto, that in these huge and vast flocks, the governors cannot take knowledge of the manners of the people, private or public; no, nor so much as of their presence at, or absence from the church assemblies; whereby what damage cometh unto true piety, any man may easily conjecture, and miserable experience makes too manifest in the reformed churches. I conclude therefore, since, as Junius saith, "it concerneth the pastor thoroughly to know the church committed unto him, the persons, their works and courses, without the knowledge of which things, he shall profit them no more than a tinkling cymbal," &c.,* that it were a point of good provision both for the conscience of the officers, and edification of the people, that a division were made of the city churches, which by continual accession of members, are thus grown out of kind, into different, and distinct congregations, under their certain, and distinct pastors, and elders.

If any object, that there is one visible, and catholic church, comprehending as the parts thereof, all the particular churches, and several congregations of divers places; as there is one ocean, or sea, diversely called, according to the divers regions by whose shores it passeth; and that therefore this matter is not worth labour spending about it, I answer, first, that the catholic church neither is, nor can be called visible: since only things singular are visible, and discerned by sense: whereas universals, or things catholic, are either only in the understanding, as some are of mind; or as others think better, are made such, to wit, universals, by the understanding abstracting from them all circumstantial accidents, considering that the kinds intelligible have their existence in nature, that is in the individuals.†

* Junius Eccl. lib. i. cap. 2.

† Sadeel. adv. Tur. in solut. 2. Syllog. in Matt. xviii. Scalig. de Subtil. Exer. 307.

Hosted by Google

2. The catholic church, with due reverence unto learned men be it spoken, is very unskilfully said to be one, as the sea is one. For, first, it is expressly said, Gen. i. 9, 10, that the waters which were under the heavens, were gathered into one place, or conceptacle, which God called sea, or seas. But the catholic church, which is said to comprehend all particular congregations in her bosom, is not gathered together into one place, nor ever shall be, before the glorious coming of Christ. 2. The ocean is a body so continued, as that all and every part thereof is continually fluent, so as the selfsame waters, which in their flux do make one sea, do in their reflux by contrary winds, make another, and so contrariwise. But thus to affirm of particular churches, and their material constitutive cause, were most absurd. 3. If some one particular sea were drawn dry, or should fail his course, a disturbance of all the rest would necessarily follow; but and if the sea should in divers places at once happen to be exhausted, or drawn dry, there would then be a failing of the ocean: neither were the waters now gathered into one place, neither made they one sea, and body of water, either continued or conjoined. But now, on the other side, upon the defection, or dissipation of this or that particular church, no such impediment should come in the way, but that the rest might hold their full course, as before. Yea, I add moreover, if all and every particular assembly in the world should languish, and fall away, one only excepted, that only one did still remain the true and entire church of Christ, without any either subordination, or co-ordination, or dependency spiritual, save unto Christ alone. The reason is plain, because this singular and sole assembly may, under Christ the head, use and enjoy every one of his institutions: the communion of saints combined together in solemn, and sacred covenant, the Word of God, sacraments, censures, and ministrations whatsoever by Christ appointed, and therewith, the same Christ's most gracious presence.

And upon this ground it is, that the apostle Paul doth entitle the particular congregation, which was at Corinth, and which properly, and immediately he did instruct, and admonish, "the body of Christ," "the temple of God,"

Hosted by Google

and one "virgin espoused to one husband Christ." 1 Cor. xii. 27; 2 Cor. vi. 10; xi. 2. We may not therefore under pretence of antiquity, unity, human prudence, or any colour whatsoever, remove the ancient bounds of the visible and ministerial church, which our right fathers, to wit, the apostles, have set; in comparison of whom, the most ancient of those, which are so called, are but infants, and beardless, as one truly, and wittily saith.*

There is indeed one church, and as the apostle speaketh, "one body, as one Spirit, one hope of our calling, one faith, one baptism;" Eph. iv. 4, 5; that is, of one kind, and nature; not one in number, as one ocean. Neither was the church at Rome in the apostles' days, more one with the church of Corinth, than was the baptism of Peter one with Paul's baptism, or than Peter and Paul were one. Neither was Peter or Paul more one, whole, entire, and perfect man, consisting of their parts essential and integral, without relation unto other men, than is a particular congregation, rightly instituted and ordered, a whole, entire, and perfect church immediately and independently, in respect of other churches, under Christ.

To conclude, since the pastor is not a minister of some part of a church, but of the whole particular church, Acts xx. 28. Attend to the whole flock, or church, "whereof the Holy Ghost hath made you bishops," &c., if the minister's office be to be confined within the circle of a particular congregation, then also the ministerial church itself. Now the pastor's office is either circumscribed within these bounds, or else "the angel of the church of Ephesus" was also "the angel of the church of Smyrna;" and so the pastor of this church is also the pastor of that; and by consequence, of all; that is, every pastor is an universal bishop, or pope by office; if not for execution, yet for power; according to which power, we are to judge of the office.

What then? will some man say. Is it not lawful for a pastor to execute his pastoral office but in the congregation over which he is set? I answer, with the apostle, "No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as Aaron," Heb. v. 4. It is not lawful for

* Cartwr. on Prov.

Hosted by Google

thee, reverend brother, to do the work of a pastor where thou art no pastor, lest thou arrogate to thyself that honour, which appertains not unto thee. Thou art called, that is elected, and ordained a pastor of some particular church, and not of all churches. It is not only lawful, but requisite, that the pastor of one church, or rather he that is the pastor, and so any other member, impart the gift either spiritual, or bodily, which he hath received, to other churches, out of the common bond of charity in which he is obliged: not so, to execute a public office over them by the prerogative of authority, which he hath not but only over his own. We will illustrate this by a similitude. Any citizen of Leyden may enjoy certain privileges in the city of Delft, by virtue of the politic combination of the United provinces, and cities, under the supreme heads thereof, the States-general; which he is bound also to help and assist with all his power if necessity require; but that the ordinary magistrate of Leyden should presume to execute his public office in the city of Delft, were an insolent, and unheard of usurpation. The very same, and not otherwise, is to be said of pastors, and particular churches, in respect of that spiritual combination mutual under their chief and sole Lord, Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF BAPTISM.

THE Dutch Reformed Churches, as is evident by their practice compared with their profession, are neither so true unto their own grounds, as they ought, neither do they so well provide for the dignity of the thing, whilst they administer the sacrament of baptism to the infants of such, as are not within the covenant, nor have either parent, a member of any church,* because

1. Baptism now, as circumcision of old, is the seal of the covenant of God, Col. ii. 11, 12, with the faithful, and their seed, "I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed,"

* Harm. of Confess. Belg. and French, Hall's edit. p. 361, Calvin, Beza, &c.

Hosted by Google

Gen. xvii. 9; and "the seal of the righteousness of faith," Rom. iv. 11; and is one, as "there is one faith, and one baptism," Eph. iv. 4, 5, and therefore ought not to be administered to others, than those within the compass of the same covenant: nor but upon faith coming between, either of the party to be baptized, or of one parent at the least. If any shall answer, that this gracious promise of God is not to be restrained to the next immediate children, but is extended even to those who follow afar off, I grant it, except infidelity, or other sin come between; by which the parents with themselves break off their seed externally and actually from the communion of the church, and holy things thereof. And if we be not to insist in the next, and immediate parent, why in the grandfather, or great-grandfather, and so for the rest, till we climb up, as high as to Noah himself? Whereupon it should follow, that not the infants of Jews, nor Turks, no, nor of Gentiles neither, should have baptism denied them. Surely the grace of Christ must needs be universal, and wherein all have interest, if the seal thereof appertain unto all. Neither should the church, amongst whose sacred furniture baptism is, by this rule be any more the house of God, peculiar to his children and servants; but more like a common inn, whose door stands wide open to all that pass by the highway.

2. The apostle, 1 Cor. vii. 14, upon this ground, that the one parent is a believer, avoweth the child holy: which otherwise he pronounceth impure, in respect of the covenant and holiness thereof, leaving unto God his secret judgments. Now what have the impure, and unhallowed to do with the holy things of God? And what hath the pastor, and shepherd in holy things to do with them, who are no portion of the Lord's flock? "What have I to do," saith the apostle, "to judge them that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within?" 1 Cor. v. 12. So, reverend brethren, what have you to do, to baptize them that are without? do you not baptize them that are within, and them alone? In the number of whom yet you reckon not those infants (though baptized by you) nor belonging to your charge. Whence also, God knoweth, it cometh to pass, for the most part, that they who are thus by you

Hosted by Google

baptized into the name of the Lord, are by their godless parents' education made the servants of Satan.

3. The baptism of infants, in all soundness of judgment, serveth, and that immediately, for the comfort of their godly parents; whose hearts it filleth with no small joy, whilst they behold the gracious promise of God made to them and their seed, ratified and confirmed by this seal: even as of old the circumcision of Isaac was granted, and enjoined by God unto Abraham, his and our father, first and immediately, for the confirmation of his faith. Whence I conclude, that the seal of the righteousness of faith, which baptism is, doth no more belong to the seed of godless parents, than doth the comfort flowing from the righteousness of faith unto the parents themselves. Whom as it would effectually move to more serious, and sad thoughts of their own estate with God, if they beheld their infants, so dear unto them, excluded through their default from the comfortable seal of God's covenant; so can they not but by the undue administration of the same, take occasion of hardening themselves in their accustomed perverseness. I conclude then with Tertullian, speaking, as Junius interprets him, of the children of such as were strangers from the covenant of God, "Let them come, when they are grown to years; let them when they have learned, and are taught wherefore they come; let them then be made Christians, when they can know Christ."*

CHAPTER III.

OF WRITTEN LITURGIES.

We cannot but mislike that custom in use, by which the pastor is wont to repeat and read out of a prayer-book certain forms, for his and the churches' prayers, and that for these reasons.

1. Because this external mien and manner of worshipping God in prayer is nowhere found in the written Word, by the prescript whereof alone he is to be worshipped, whatsoever either the Jews' fable of the liturgy of Ezra; or the papists of St. Peter's, or St. James' liturgies. Isa. xxix.

* Tertul. de Bapt. ch. 18. Junius Annot. in idem cap.

Hosted by Google

13; Matt. xv. 9; Col. ii. 23. Yea, contrariwise, I add for overplus, that it did not seem good to the apostles, the last penmen of the Holy Ghost, that any such prescript form for such end should come in use, in the churches. And this seemeth unto me very clear, from the former epistle of Paul to Timothy, chap. ii. 1, 2. The kings of the earth in those days, and such as were in authority under them, being, as it were, so many sworn enemies of the name of Christ, this conceit might easily, and it seems did, creep into the minds of divers Christians, that these kinds of men were rather to be prayed against, than for, by the servants of Christ. And now, what was the medicine prescribed by the apostle for this malady in that epistle written to Timothy for that very end, that he "might know how to converse in the church of God?" 1 Tim. iii. 15. Did he now either send Timothy to any liturgy formerly set forth for his own and others' direction? Or did he himself frame any for the purpose, whose beaten troad the churches following afterwards should not err? Nothing less: although a more fit, and full occasion for that business scarce be offered: which without doubt, Paul would no more have let slip, than did the other apostles, that which was more light, for the introduction of deacons, Acts vi. 2, 3, if it had seemed good to the Holy Ghost, by whose finger he was guided in the ordering of the churches, that any such book-prayer should have come into use.

Three things especially are objected, which must here be cleared. The first is, that David, and other prophets penned the book of Psalms for the mother church of Israel. The second, that Christ himself delivered to his disciples a certain form of prayer, commonly called, "The Lord's Prayer." The third, that Moses from the Lord, Numb. vi., gave direction to Aaron, and his sons, in what form of words they should bless the children of Israel.

I answer first generally, that the consequence followeth not from the authority of Christ, and of Moses, and of the apostles, in ordaining these, and these forms of Divine worship, for the like authority in ordinary bishops, and pastors, to ordain other, and divers forms, for the same end. What can be spoken more insolently? Christ the Lord, Moses, the prophets, and apostles, being immediately

Hosted by Google

and infallibly guided by the Spirit of Christ, have prescribed certain set forms of God's worship; therefore others, though not immediately and infallibly guided by the same Spirit, may also prescribe them. Why may they not by this argumentation, as well frame us a new canon of Holy Scriptures, considering that even these very forms, wherewith also they equalize their own, are parts, and portions of the same scriptures? More particularly, and first for Psalms. I deny that there is the same reason of a prayer, and of a Psalm; or (whereupon the difference hangeth) that singing and praying are all one. For the question is not, which I desire the reader once for all to bear in mind, either of the internal affection of him that singeth, or prayeth; or of the subject-matter of the song or prayer: but of the external act and exercise of praying and singing. Now these two exercises both the Holy Scriptures, and common sense in every man, that pleaseth but to open his eyes, and look upon them, do plainly difference.

For first, if to sing be to pray, then whosoever singeth prayeth: but how far from truth this is, the Psalms of David, i., ii., and many others in which not the least parcel of prayer is to be found, do plainly evince.

2. "Is any man sad amongst you," saith the apostle, "let him pray; is he merry, let him sing." James v. 13. To pray then, and to sing, are not the same, nor which do agree, to wit primarily, with the same constitution of the mind.

3. In prayer the pastor's voice is only heard, unto which the people, as the apostle teacheth, 1 Cor. xiv. 14, 16, are to add their Amen: but in singing, all the multitude have as well their part for tuneable voice, as the pastor himself. Neither can divers possibly sing together, without confusion, but by a certain and set form, both of words and syllables, which yet may be done in church prayer, and is everywhere.

4. We have the same apostle elsewhere teaching us thus: "Speaking to yourselves in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs." Eph. v. 19. And again, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you plenteously, with all wisdom, teaching and admonishing yourselves mutually in psalms and hymns." Col. iii. 16. In singing then we do speak to ourselves, or

Hosted by Google

one to another mutually: but in praying, neither to ourselves, nor to our brethren, but unto God alone. And the reason hereof is evident. Whenas we read or sing the Psalms of David (for what other thing is it to sing out of a book, than to read with a loud and harmonious voice? of which harmony singing is a kind):* these selfsame psalms in this very use do still remain, and so are read or sung, as a part of the Word of God in the Holy Scriptures: and in which God speaketh unto us: whereas on the other side, we do speak unto God, in all our prayers, whether mental only, or vocal withal.

5. Even these very psalms, whose matter is prayer and thanksgiving, were framed and composed by the prophets into psalms, and spiritual songs, for this very end, that the men of God might in them teach us, as in the written Word of God, whereof they are parts, both what petitions they in their distresses put up to the Lord, and also what thanksgiving they returned upon their deliverance, that so we in reading and singing them, might instruct and admonish ourselves both publicly and privately, whether by way of doctrine, or admonition, or consolation, for the promoting of the glory of God in our hearts.

Lastly, That I may descend unto them, who are only taught by experience; if any going out of the temple, whilst the church were singing a psalm, either before or after sermon, being asked of one that met him, what the church were then doing, should answer that it were at prayer, would he not be judged by all men to tell a lie? but altogether without cause, if to sing, be to pray, as many imagine.

Touching the Lord's Prayer. We deny it to be the meaning of Christ, teaching his disciples, when they pray to say, "Our Father," &c., to bind them, and the Holy Ghost in them, Jude 20, by which they ought to pray, to a certain form of words and syllables, which they should repeat by heart, or, which is our question, read out of a book. Because, 1. The two evangelists, Matthew and Luke, of whom both the one and other did aright both understand and express the meaning of Christ, do not precisely keep the same words. 2. By these words, "when you pray," is meant, whensoever

* Scalig. Poet. lib. i. cap. 2.

Hosted by Google

you pray: whereupon it should follow, that we were tied to this stint of words alone, and always: and so might lawfully use none other, except it be lawful for us sometimes to pray rather by the level of our own device, than of Christ's prescript. The words therefore of Cyprian* are good in a good sense. To pray otherwise than Christ hath taught, is not only ignorance, but guilt, seeing he himself hath said, you reject the precepts of God, that you may observe your own tradition. Matt. vi. 6. 3. Amongst the many, and manifold prayers of the apostles to be seen in the Holy Scriptures, this form of words is not found: and yet can it not be denied, but they always prayed as they were taught in this place by their master Christ: whose meaning therefore it could not be to tie them necessarily to any such certain form of words. 4. It appears by the context, that the purpose of Christ is to speak of private, or rather secret prayer, and such as every Christian apart from others, and in his closet, with the door shut unto him, should pour out unto the Lord. Now that one alone, and by himself, should say, "Our Father," seems not very congruous. Lastly, Seeing of the like, there is the like consideration; if the apostle James in these words, "Go to now, ye that say, To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city," &c., James iv. 13; and verse 15, "For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this or that," do neither simply find fault with the form of words, nor prescribe necessarily any other, but only (to use Calvin's words†) wakens them from their dream, who without respect of the Divine providence, will make themselves masters of a whole year, when there is not a moment in their power: so neither are we to conceive that our Saviour, Christ, Matt. vi. and Luke xi., doth enjoin unto his, any set words to pray in, but only shows whither all our prayers and vows ought to be referred, as with all other orthodox writers‡ about this matter, the said author§ speaketh: howsoever divers unskilful men cease not still to sing unto us, even to loathsomeness, the song, when you pray, say, as the papists do theirs, "This is my body:" as though the con-

* Cyprian. de Orat. Domin. † Calv. in Jac. ch. 4, v. 1, 15.
‡ Ursinus, Bucanus, Piscator, Perkins, &c. § Calv. in Matt. vi. 7.

Hosted by Google

troversy were about the words, and not rather about the meaning of them.

But for that we are very odiously traduced by divers, as abhorring from this form, and that we will not, as they use to speak, say the Lord's Prayer, I will in few and plain terms set down what our judgment is about it.

1. And seeing that, as the poet hath it, "the names do commonly suit with the things," we may see, and sorrow withal, in the phrases in common use about this most Christian duty of prayer, what it is with the unhallowed multitude of Christians to pray, namely, to say prayer, to read prayer, to hear prayer, and rather anything than indeed to pray, that is, than to pour out the conceptions of a godly and devout mind unto God, from faith and feeling of our wants, by the Holy Ghost.

2. We do affirm, that this form of words is improperly, how commonly soever, called the Lord's Prayer: as neither being a prayer as it is the Lord's, nor the Lord's as it is a prayer. As it is of the Lord Christ, and so the Lord's, whether by himself uttered in words, or committed to writing by his evangelists, it hath the consideration and respect of a sermon, and of evangelical doctrine, in which Christ taught his disciples; and not of a prayer put up to his Father: as on the contrary it neither was, nor could be used prayerwise by Christ, in so many words; with whose most perfect sanctimony it did not agree for him to say, Forgive us our trespasses.

3. We do firmly believe, that all and every both church and person is bound always to pray, as Christ hath there taught: whether we respect the matter there propounded, or the affections there enjoined, or the commodious and compendious simplicity which Christ our Saviour, and only Master, there opposeth, both to the vain babblings, and oft repetitions of the heathens: and that in these things, and them alone, the commandment of Christ doth consist, we both firmly believe, and confidently avow.

4. And lastly, we doubt not but that this very form of words may be, and is rightly used in prayer unto God, provided there be neither opinion of necessity, by which superstitious persons think themselves stinted by the Lord to words and syllables, nor of perfection, by which many

Hosted by Google

are of mind, that they have then at the last, and not before prayed perfectly, when they have repeated this form of words. And it is well, if some spot of this mire cleave not to the fingers of many ministers; which make it a matter of great conscience not to conclude their and the churches' prayers applied specially to the present state of things, with this number and measure of words. Which custom as it is used very commonly, so in my judgment, with no great reason, for these two causes.

First, It seems to cross all good order, and method, by which men should descend from the more general unto that which is more special: and not go the clean contrary way, as in this they do.

Secondly. Since the rule, according to philosophy, and good reason, is always before the thing ruled, and that this form is by Christ instituted, for this purpose, that it might be the rule and square of all our prayers, and as Tertullian saith,* is premised, as the foundation of all our accessory desires, methinks the same should rather be used in the first place; upon which as the same author hath it, every one should build the circumstances of his occasioned requests.

It remaineth that in a few words I answer that, which is by some objected touching those solemn blessings, at the first imparted by the patriarchs to their first-born, and after by the priests to Israel the first-born of God. Exod. iv. 22.

And to let pass, 1. That the composers, and imposers of the liturgies now in use have not equal authority with Moses the man of God, nor are their writings any way comparable with his. 2. That Moses did not prescribe unto the priests a stint of words for blessing, much less to be read out of a book, but the substance of the thing; which by many arguments, save that I study for brevity, might be proved.† 3. If that were Moses' mind, and the Lord's by him, the minister were bound to the same form of blessing upon the Israel of God now, Gal. vi. 16, which the church is: since there is nothing in it not moral, and perpetual, or not concerning the church now, as then. I do answer this one thing, and the same in Calvin's words,

* Tertull. lib. de Orat. † Johnson on Written Liturgies.

Hosted by Google

viz. that these blessings were not ordinary prayers, but a lawful authority divinely interposed to testify the grace of election:* which he also confirms by divers reasons. Neither can any man who considers the words of the text make question, but that the priests in blessing Israel, not God, do direct their speech unto Israel by way of promise, and not unto God by way of prayer. "So bless you," saith Moses, "the children of Israel, saying unto them, The Lord bless thee," &c. The same is to be judged of the salutations of the apostles in their epistles, whereof they are a part, and so a part of the Holy Scriptures, albeit yet they, in them, as the priests in their blessings, desired to have their truly loving affection taken knowledge of by them to whom they wrote: and what good things they both desired at the hands of the Lord for them, and also promised them in his name.

2. We dislike all reading of prayer, in the act of praying, as inconvenient, yea, directly contrary unto that act? In prayer we do pour out matter, to wit the holy conceptions of the mind, from within to without; that is, from the heart to God: on the contrary, in reading, we do receive and admit matter from without to within; that is from the book, into the heart. Let him that prayeth do that which he doth, not another thing, not a divers thing. Let the whole man, and all that he is, both in soul and body, be bent upon God, with whom he converseth. The eyes of the mind are lifted to God in prayer; and why not the eyes of the body also? both which, he that prayeth, by intending them upon a book, both depresseth and averteth from God. The Apostle exhorteth, that "the men pray, lifting up pure hands to God in every place." 1 Tim. ii. 8. In like manner, besides the reason of the thing, we have the patriarchs, prophets, Christ himself, with his apostles, and disciples, for ensamples of lifting up the eyes to heaven in prayer. Not that this gesture of body is simply necessary but most convenient, save in some great temptation, and depression of mind, both to express and further the intention of a godly heart.

Let devout and learned men, if they please, commit to writing their holy meditations, and secret conferences with

* Calvin in Genes. c. 27, v. 1.

Hosted by Google

God, as did Austin, and others amongst the ancients; and many of later times: which may be read, and that with no small benefit, both by pastor and people; but privately, and for better preparation unto prayer. Now the preparation unto prayer is very unseasonable at the self-same time of the solemn performance thereof; and unreasonable in and by the self-same act.

3. Seeing that "public prayer," as Bucanus saith,* "is a second part of the ministry;" as also that amongst the gifts of the Holy Ghost, wherewith the pastor is endued from above, that is not small, nor to be despised, by which he is able conveniently both for matter and form, to conceive a prayer according to the church's present occasion, and necessities; by the reading of this prescript form, that truly excellent gift, given of God for this end is made void, and of none use, and the Spirit, contrary to that which ought to be, extinguished. 1 Thess. v. 19. "The manifestation of the Spirit," saith the apostle, "is given to every one," especially to every pastor, "to profit withal." 1 Cor. xii. 7. But he who reads a form of prayer conceived and consigned by another, doth not manifest the pastoral gift, (for of the internal affection our question is not) of the Spirit given to him to profit withal, but to that other by whom the form of prayer was indited.

4. If to read such a form of prayer be to pray aright, and pastor-like, no probable reason can be rendered, wherefore to read a sermon, or homily, is not as well to preach aright, and as is required of the pastor of the church. Which so being, small reason had the apostle, treating of the ecclesiastical ministry, which principally consists in these two exercises, Acts vi. 4, to cry out, as he did, "Who is sufficient for these things?" 2 Cor. ii. 16. For who is not sufficient even of the vulgar sort? who cannot read a liturgy, and an homily?

5. "The Spirit," saith the same apostle, speaking of all Christians, "helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what to pray, as we ought." Rom. viii. 26. Yes, Paul, with your leave, right well; for we have in our prayer-book, what we ought to pray, word for word, whether the Spirit be present or not. What then is to be done in this busi-

* Bucanus, loc. Com. de Orat.

Hosted by Google

ness? That which Tertullian saith the Christians of his time did. "We pray," saith he, "without any to prompt us, because we pray from the heart."* But he who reads his prayers, or rather the prayers of him that penned them, and his lesson out of a book, hath one that prompts him, and that diligently, both what, and how much, and after what manner, and with what words and syllables he ought to pray.

Lastly, If it would be just matter of shame to any earthly father, that his child, who desired of him bread, fish, or an egg, should need to read out of a book, or paper, "Father, I pray you give me bread, fish, or egg;" how much more contumelious is it, to our heavenly Father, and his Holy Spirit, wherewith he furnisheth all his children, especially his ministers according to their place, that an help so unworthy, and more than babyish, and indeed the instrument of a "foolish shepherd," Rom. viii. 26; Jude 20; Zec. ii. 15; xii. 10; namely a bare reader, with which kind of vermin Rome and England are pestered, should be used by such godly and learned pastors, as wherewith the reformed churches are furnished.

CHAPTER IV.

OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PRESBYTERY.

We do so acknowledge, and approve of, as divinely instituted, the presbyteries of the particular churches, as with all we judge them sundry ways defective. As first we require, that all received into the college, and company of elders, even those which are called governors, should be "apt to teach," 1 Tim. iii. 2, and "able to exhort with sound doctrine," and "convince gainsayers," Tit. i. 5, 7, 9, and that not only privately, or in the consistory, but in the public assembly also, as the nature of their public office requireth. I am not ignorant, what that learned man Gersom Bucer† in his late treatise hath published about this matter, neither do I unwillingly assent thereunto: provided only, that what he requires in those elders, that they

* Tertul. adver. Gentes.

† Gersom Buc. Dissert. de Gubernatione Ecclesiæ, pp. 32, 33, 44.

Hosted by Google

be able to perform publicly, and in the church-assembly, if not exactly, yet competently.

A second defect, which we wish supplied is, that of annual or triennial or temporary, they might be perpetual, and for life, (except by some casualty, or occurrence they be disabled) as the pastors themselves. This term of years for the elders' administration in the reformed churches, the forenamed author in the same place doth not so much defend, as excuse; but it seemeth rather needful to have it reformed, which is also the desire of the said learned man, and that for these reasons.

1. The apostle Paul calling unto him the elders of the church of Ephesus to Miletus, doth pronounce of them all, as well the governors, as those that laboured in the Word, that they were made bishops or overseers of the same church, by the Holy Ghost. Acts xx. 17, 28. Now the authority of that the appointer ought to work in the appointed great conscience, not lightly to relinquish that charge, which by the disposition of the Holy Ghost they had taken upon them.

2. The same apostle doth in the same place admonish and exhort the same elders that they should take heed unto themselves, and to all the flock, lest the same, after his departure should unhappily be damnified, either by "wolves entering in among them," or such as should "rise up from themselves speaking perverse things." Acts xx. 28—31. Now if the date of their eldership and charge were shortly to be out, they might well think with themselves, that the apostle's admonition for after-times did not much concern them, whose term of office should so shortly be expired, and were perhaps to follow the apostle's departure at the heels.

3. It was sacrilege for the Levites being consecrated to the Lord, for the service of the tabernacle and temple, to retire from the office undertaken by them; although, age growing upon them, they were exempted from some the more laborious works of that ministration: how then is it lawful for the elders, or deacons (being now no more at their own disposing, but as the Levites of old, the Lord's sacred and consecrated ones) to withdraw so lightly from his special service? Numb. viii. 24, 25. No man under

Hosted by Google

the law might change a beast, if clean, no, not a better for a worse, if once hallowed to the Lord. Lev. xxvii. 9, 10. How much less may the church, then, discharge her officers, or they themselves, ministering faithfully, and as they ought!

Lastly, the apostle Paul instructing the church, in Timothy, to keep the commandment of Christ unrebukable until that his glorious appearing, doth not permit, no, not to the widows and deaconesses to relinquish the office once taken upon them, 1 Tim. v. 9—12, 21; vi. 14; 1 Cor. xiv. 37; unto whom for that very cause he forbids marriage itself, otherwise permitted to all, and to some enjoined. How much less lawful is it for the elders, or deacons of the church, whose both condition and ministry is far more excellent, for far lighter causes, to look back, and relinquish their vocation, wherein Christ hath in such sort placed them!

A third thing there is, and that of most moment, viz. that the elders do not administer their public office publicly, as they should, but only in their private consistory. And first, the administration of every office doth in right follow the nature of the same; whether domestical in the family, or civil in the commonwealth, or spiritual in the church: the elders' office then being public, requires answerable and public administration. Not that it is unlawful for the elders to convene, and meet apart from the body, and to deliberate of such things as concerns the same, and so to do sundry things by virtue of their office; but because that is not sufficient, neither do they indeed fulfil their public and church-office, which in the Lord they have received, Col. iv. 17; except as privately, and in their consistory, so also (and that specially) publicly, and in the face of the congregation, they execute the same.

2. The apostle beseecheth them of Thessalonica that they would in love highly esteem for their work's sake, not only them which laboured among them, to wit, in doctrine; 1 Thess. v. 12, 13; but them also, which were over them in the Lord, and admonished them. 1 Tim. v. 17. But of the work of their elders which govern, the reformed churches must needs be ignorant; neither do, or can they know, whether they be good, or bad. Their pastors they

Hosted by Google

do prosecute with due love, and honour, out of their own certain knowledge of them and their work, but their elders only by hearsay.

Lastly, The same apostle warneth the elders of Ephesus, that they attend and take heed to the whole flock, in which they were made bishops. Acts xx. 17, 28. But it cannot be, that he should ministerially, as he ought, feed the whole church, whose voice the greatest part thereof never so much as once heareth. To lead, or receive a sheep now and then into the sheepfold, to confirm one that is weak, or correct one that strayeth, and that apart from the flock, is in no wise to feed the whole flock, as the apostle requireth.

And that this point may be made the more plain, let us descend unto some such particulars, as in which the elders' office seemeth specially to consist. And they are, the admitting of members into the church, upon profession of faith made; and the reproving and censuring of obstinate offenders, whether sinning publicly, or privately with scandal. As we willingly leave the execution and administration of these things to the elders alone in the settled and well-ordered state of the church, so do we deny plainly, that they are, or can be rightly, and orderly done, but with the people's privity and consent.

For the first, Christ the Lord gave in charge to his apostles to preach in his name remission of sins, and, therewith, life eternal: and that such Jews, or Gentiles, as should believe and repent, viz. profess, holily, faith and repentance, (for to judge of the heart is God's prerogative), they should receive into the fellowship of the church, and baptize. And that these all and every of them were publicly, and in the face of the congregation to be administered, the Acts of the Apostles do plenteously make known. And if baptism, the consequent of the confession of faith, in them baptized, and the badge of our consociation with Christ and his church, be to be celebrated publicly, why is not the profession of faith proportionably (although by the formerly baptized through a kind of unorderly anticipation) to be made publicly also, and, therewithal, the consociation ecclesiastical, as the former? The covenant privately made, and the seal publicly annexed, are disproportionate.

Hosted by Google

I further add, that since persons admitted into the church, are by the whole body, if not of enemies, at least of strangers, become and are to be reputed brethren in Christ most nearly joined, and they, with whom they are to call upon one common Father publicly, to participate of one holy bread, 1 Cor. x. 17; and with whom they are to have all things, even bodily goods, after a sort, common, as every one hath need, Acts ii. 44, 45; it seemeth most equal, that not only the presbyters, the churches' servants under Christ, but the whole commonalty also, should take knowledge in their persons, both of their holy profession of faith, and voluntary submission made, as unto Christ himself, so to his most holy institutions in his church.

To come to the second head. And 1. Those who sin, that is, with public scandal, "rebuke publicly," saith the apostle, "that others also may fear." 1 Tim. v. 20. And if the elders themselves, of whom he speaketh, for whose credit the greatest care is to be taken, much more than any other, as Beza rightly observeth.* And that not for this cause alone, that when the punishment comes to one, the fear might reach unto many, which yet wise men in all public executions would have carefully provided for, but also that both he that so sinneth may be the more ashamed, and others both within and without may, withal, take knowledge, how little indulgent the church is to her own dearest ones in their enormous sins.

2. With this also it well consorteth, that Christ the only Doctor of his church, would have not only sins scandalous committed in public, publicly reproved, and before the multitude, but even those which are private, obstinately persisted in, when he saith, "Tell the church," &c. Matt. xviii. 15—17.

I am not ignorant, how diversely, divers men do interpret these words: whilst some, by the church, do understand the civil court of the magistrate; others, the hierarchical bishop, with his officials; others, the senate of elders excluding the people. And thus whilst these strive for the power, and name, withal, of the church amongst themselves, the church indeed, and which Christ the Lord meaneth, is well nigh stripped both of power and name.

* Beza annot. in loc.

Hosted by Google

The first of these three interpretations I will not trouble myself with; as being almost of all, and that worthily exploded and rejected, and abundantly refuted by divers learned men:* the two latter are to be assaulted with almost the same weapons.

The former of these two, though it be in itself the more different from Christ's meaning, yet comes it in this circumstance now in consideration, the nearer the truth in our judgment, considered in its execution: since neither the bishops, nor their officials, chancellors, commissaries, or other court-keepers, do exclude the people from their consistories and courts, but do offer themselves in their public judgments and censures to the view of all who please to be present thereat. And I think it a course unheard of either amongst Gentiles or Jews, or Christians (be it spoken without offence) before this last age, that public judgments and other acts of public nature, as these are, should be privately exercised, and without the people's privity. It was not so in Israel of old, where by God's appointment the elders were to sit, and judge in the gates of the city: nor in the synagogues themselves, from which many are of mind, how truly, I will not say, that the Christian eldership was derived, after the Roman tyranny had confined into them the Jews' civil conventions and judgments; nor in the primitive church, no not in some ages after the apostles, as might easily be proved out of Tertullian, Cyprian, and others, if I would try the matter in that court: but it is much more safe, as Austin saith, to walk by the Divine Scriptures.†

And first the word ἐκκλησία, church, originally Greek, answering to the Hebrew קָהָל, doth primarily and properly signify a convention of citizens called from their houses by the public crier, either to hear some public sentence or charge given: but translated to religious use, denoteth an assembly of persons called out of the state of corrupt nature into that of supernatural grace, by the publishing of the gospel. Now the elders, or presbyters, as such, are, and so are said to be, called, to wit, to their office of eldership, but called out they are not, being themselves to call out

* Beza, Zanchius, Parker, G. Bucer, in loc.

† August. de Doct. Christ. lib. 3.

Hosted by Google

the church, and unto it to perform the crier's office. Neither do I think that the name *ecclesia*, church, hath been used by any Greek author, before the apostles' times, or in their days, or in the age after them, for the assembly of sole governors in the act of their government, or, indeed, before the same governors had seized into their own, and only hands the church's both name and power.

But you will say, as learned men use to do, that these elders sustain the person of the whole multitude, and supply their room, for the avoiding of confusion; and so are rightly, as commonly called the church representative.

In answer, First, No godly, no, nor reasonable man will affirm, that this representation is to be extended to all the acts of religion, or indeed to others, than these, which are exercised in the governing of the church. What is it then? The elders in ruling and governing the church must represent the people, and occupy their place. It should seem, then, that it appertains unto the people, unto the people, primarily and originally, under Christ, to rule and govern the church, that is, themselves. But who will so say of a government, not personal but public, and instituted as the churches' is?

2. If the elders in their consistory represent the church, then whatsoever they either decree or do, agreeing to the Word of God, whether respecting faith or manners, that also the church decreeth and doth, though absent, though ignorant both what the thing is which is done, and upon what grounds it is done by the elders; this being the nature of representations, that what the representing doth within the bounds of his commission, that the represented doth primarily, and much more, as but using the other for his instrument. Now how dissonant this is to true faith and piety, how consonant unto the papists' implicit faith, no man can be ignorant; and I had rather wise men should consider, than I, aggravate.

3. The constant and universal practice of the apostles and apostolic churches, do quite cross this consistorian course. The apostle Paul, well acquainted with the meaning of Christ, doth, 1 Cor. v., so reduce into practice the rule and prescript of his Master, Matt. xviii., or to use the

Hosted by Google

words of the Bishop of Chichester,* "there commands to bring into practice this power, in the name of Christ, with his Spirit," as he seems to leave no place for doubting to him who with diligence, and without prejudice, will compare together these two places: what the Lord meaneth when he saith, "Tell the church." This our apostle doth in that place reprove, not the elders or governors alone, but with them also the whole commonalty and body, for tolerating the incestuous person amongst them. Which therefore, accordingly, as his authority apostolical and care for all the churches, 2 Cor. ii. 28, did require; he admonisheth and directeth, that as mindful both of the sinner's repentance and salvation, and therewith of their own purity, they would exclude, by due order, that wicked man from their holy fellowship. And that by these words, "When ye are come together," the whole church is to be understood, many but heavy friends to the people's liberty, Jesuits, Prelatists, and others, do grant. But we will annex certain reasons for the further clearing of the thing.

1. They among whom the fornicator was, who were puffed up when they should have sorrowed, and out of the midst of whom he was to be put, who had done that thing, they were to be gathered together in one, and to judge and excommunicate that incestuous person. 1 Cor. v. 1—13. But the fornicator was not amongst the elders alone, neither were they alone puffed up when they should have sorrowed, neither was that wicked man to be taken out of the midst of them and still left in the midst of the people; and therefore not to be judged by them alone, but by the church with them, though governed by them.

2. It did not of old appertain only to the Levites and elders in Israel, to purge out of their houses the material leaven, but to every father of a family also; so by proportion to the whole church now, to purge out the leaven spiritual there spoken of: which also could not leaven the whole lump, or church, in the apostle's meaning, except it had concerned the whole church to purge it out. 1 Cor. v. 7.

3. The apostle wrote not to the elders only, but with

* Epis. Cicen. ad M. Tort. lib. Resp. p. 43.

Hosted by Google

them to the whole body, not to be commingled with fornicators, covetous persons, or the like, called brethren; he therefore admonisheth them, as the other, to cast their stone at the incestuous man, for the taking him away from the Lord's people. 1 Cor. v. 9, 11.

Many more arguments, and the same very clear, might be drawn to this end, out of the text itself; but for brevity's sake I will omit them, and annex this only one which followeth, from the second chapter of the second epistle. The same apostle, writing to these same Corinthians, about the same incestuous person, but now penitent, as before delinquent, seriously exhorts them, that look what severity they had formerly showed in censuring him for his sin, the like compassion they would now show, in receiving him again upon his repentance: therein plainly insinuating, that this business was not in the hands of the elders alone; except we will say, that they alone were made sad by the apostles' reproof, that they alone by their study, defence, indignation, zeal, &c., testified that they were pure in the thing, and except it belonged to them alone to pardon and comfort the repentant sinner, and to confirm their love unto him. 2 Cor. ii. 7, 8; vii. 9, 11.

And whereas some would inclose this whole power within the apostle's circuit, as if he alone, bishop-like, had passed sentence judiciary upon the offender, and only committed the declaration and publication of it in the church to some his substitute, I deem it not lost labour briefly to show how erroneous this opinion is of external, monarchical government, yea, power also which is more, in the church of Christ.

And, first, one alone, how great soever, cannot suffice to make the church, or a congregation, which Christ hath furnished with the power of binding and loosing, Matt. xviii. 17—19,* both reason and Scripture teaching, that for an assembly and congregation, at least, two or three are required. "The Church, which name signifies a multitude, designing by a new trope one alone singular person," as saith D. Whitaker against Stapleton,† going about to prove

* Vide Episc. Cicen. ad Tort. pp. 41, 42.

† Whitak. de Authoritate Scripturæ, lib. 1, cap. 1, 10.

Hosted by Google

that "the name of the church belongs to the pastors, or bishops, or pope alone."

2. It is expressly affirmed, 2 Cor. ii. 6, that the incestuous person was censured by many: which many or more, the apostle opposeth to himself alone, as appeareth by the context, and not to all as some erroneously think.

3. The apostle plainly and sharply reproveth the Corinthians for that, before his writing, they had not voided that sinful man their holy fellowship, and so prevented the report by which such a crime, and the same unpunished, came to his ears. This their power, then, the man of God doth not seize into his own hands, as forfeit by their default in not using it, but vehemently, and as became a faithful minister, exhorts and admonishes them to use it, as they ought, in the judging, purging out, and taking from among themselves that wicked man, and so any other within, or called a brother, sinning in the like manner.

4. If the apostle Paul, being absent from Corinth, had excommunicated this sinner, then had he judicially condemned and judged a man unaccused, unconvicted, and unreproved, at least face to face and before his judge,* than which what more unjust can be imagined of, or ascribed unto, the holy apostle? I conclude, therefore, with Peter Martyr on 1 Cor. v., "The apostle, as great as he was, doth not so far usurp to himself power, as that he one and alone by himself should excommunicate: which yet the Pope and many bishops (both Romish and English) dare do; in judging he goes before others, as it is meet the chief in the church should do, that so the less skilful multitude might be directed in judging by their voting before them."

Thus much of this place. The next followeth, which is Acts i. 20—26. When another was to succeed in the room of Judas the traitor, not Peter alone, or the apostles with him, but, that the ordination might be just and lawful, being made with the knowledge of the people assistant, and examined by the verdict and judgment of all,† the multitude of the disciples together did substitute two, whom they deemed most excellent, that of them the Lord,

* Gel. Snecanus, Ch. Discipl., 3 parte Meth. cap. 2.

† Cyprian, l. 1, Epist. 4.

Hosted by Google

who knew the hearts of all men, Acts i. 24, might take unto himself the man which he knew most fit. Gal. i. 1. That which belonged unto God, namely, to design an apostle immediately, was left unto him; the disciples also, in this work, retaining what might be their liberty, which Calvin notes upon this place, to have been a kind of middle temper.

The third place followeth, which is Acts vi. 1—8, handling the choice of deacons, and that by the same church in Jerusalem, not now small, as before, but (which I wish may be marked to stop the passage, which some think lies open for escape through smaller assemblies) now become great and populous. In this business the apostles inform the church what kind of men they ought to choose: the multitude chooseth whom they judge fit and meet accordingly, and the same present to the apostles; upon whom, so chosen by the people, the said apostles impose hands as a solemn symbol of their consecration, joining therewith common prayer. Now if the deacons only be trusted with the church's money, were not to be made but by the people's suffrage and election: much less pastors and elders, unto whose fidelity under Christ the same church doth commit the incomparable treasure of their souls.

To the same purpose, in regard of the matter in hand, serveth that which we read, Acts xiv. 23, where "Paul and Barnabas do ordain elders in every church, by suffrages," not their own, as some fancy, unto whom to lift up and to lay on hands is all one, but the people's; or "by the lifting up of hands," by which sign the Grecians, as appears in Demosthenes and others, the people's vote or voice giving in their popular assemblies was wont to be made. I add, which is especially to be observed, that the apostles, in doing their part in the ordination of elders, did what they did as it were by the way; staying only, most like, two or three days in a place: so as they could not possibly by their own experience take sufficient knowledge, what persons in the church were apt to teach or govern: who able to exhort with sound doctrine, and to convince the gainsayers: how unblameable they were, how watchful, given to hospitality, temperate, &c., and with these, how mannered wives and children they had. 1 Tim. iii. 1—7; Tit.

Hosted by Google

i. 7. These things only, the brethren, which conversed with them publicly and privately, could sufficiently take knowledge and experience of. Upon their electing them, did the ordination conferred by the apostles, as the hands of the church, depend. By election, the persons elected have right to their offices; into the actual possession whereof they are solemnly admitted by ordination.

This troop of proofs, that known and notable place, Acts xv., shall shut up: in which we have the people's liberty in the churches, both of Antioch and Jerusalem, plentifully confirmed and commended by apostolic practice to ensuing churches, and times.

And first, It is evident, that in the Church of Antioch, together with the elders, which, it appears then it had, Acts xiv. 21, 23, the brethren were admitted into the fellowship of the business, and disquisition made about circumcision:* Paul and Barnabas, with the rest of the delegates, then sent, being "brought on their journey by the church," ver. 3, the letters also being written back from Jerusalem "to the brethren which were at Antioch," ver. 23, and which is specially to be noted, then, and not before, "delivered when the multitude were come together," ver. 30. So in the church at Jerusalem the messengers from Antioch were received not only "of the apostles and elders," but of "the church," with them, ver. 4. And as the question was propounded so was it discussed before the whole church by "the apostles and elders coming together to look unto that business," ver. 6, yet not so as the brethren were wholly bound to silence, seeing that ver. 11, the whole multitude is said to have held their peace; that is, to have yielded to Peter's speech, and reasons. Lastly, As "Silas and Judas" were sent with Paul and Barnabas, "by the apostles, and elders, with the whole church," unto Antioch, ver. 22, so were the letters written back in the name of them all "to the brethren at Antioch," ver. 23. And although the decrees to be observed by the churches of the Gentiles, whereof no one, excepting Antioch, had any delegates present, which were also part of the Word of God, and holy canon, could come from none other than the apostles, immediately inspired by the

* Whitak. de Author. Scrip. lib. 1, ch. 5, sect. 1.

Hosted by Google

Holy Ghost, they notwithstanding in the publishing of the same, did not disdain the consenting suffrage of the brethren of that particular church of Jerusalem, where the assembly was.*

And surely, if it ever did, or could appertain to any church officers or governors whatsoever to represent the church assemblies, in elections, censures, and other ecclesiastical judgments, and occurrences; then without doubt unto the apostles in an eminent, and peculiar manner, especially living in that rude, and childish state of the church, considering both how superlative their office was, and how admirable their gifts, and endowments of the Holy Ghost, together with their incomparable both piety, and prudence; by which they were both most able, and willing, to promote the Christian faith in holiness. And although this constant and uniform both practice and institution of the apostles unto divers politic persons, swelling with pride of fleshly reason, despising apostolical simplicity, and who, as Ireneus speaks,† would be rectifiers of the apostles, seem worthy of light regard, yet to us, who believe with Theodoret, that we "ought to rest in the apostolical and prophetical demonstrations;"‡ and who, with Tertullian, do adore the fulness of the Scriptures,§ they seem of singular weight and moment.

And whilst I consider with myself, in the fear of God, how it was the apostles' duty to teach the disciples of Christ "to observe whatsoever he commanded them," Matt. xxviii. 20; and how the apostle Paul testifieth, that even the things which he wrote, touching order and comeliness to be observed in the church exercises, were the commandments of the Lord, 1 Cor. xiv. 37; as also how the same apostle clearly professeth, that he and his fellow-officers were only to be reputed as ministers and ambassadors of Christ, 1 Cor. iv. 1; 2 Cor. v. 20; to whom therefore in the execution of their office, it was not permitted to do, or speak the least thing, which they had not in charge from him; it is unto me a matter of great scruple, and conscience, to depart one hair-breadth, (extraordinary acci-

* Johan. Wolfius, in 2 Kings xxiii.
† In Adv. Hæres. lib. 3. ‡ Theodor. Dial. 1.
§ Tertull. ad Hermog.

Hosted by Google

dents ever excepted) from their practice, and institution, in anything truly ecclesiastical, though never so small in itself; —whatsoever, by whomsoever, and with what colour soever is invented, and imposed;—touching the government of the church, which is the "house and tabernacle of the living God." 2 Tim. iii. 15. And a partner in this faith I do hope to live, and die, and to appear before Jesus Christ, with boldness in that great and fearful day of his coming.

I add, that seeing the Christian congregation, as the spouse of Christ, free and ingenuous, hath the church officers whosoever, as Christ Jesus her husband's, so also her servants for Jesus' sake, whom, under Christ, she trusteth with her eternal salvation, and unto whom for their labour she oweth wages for relief and maintenance, 2 Cor. iv. 5; 1 Tim. iv. 16; v. 17, 18; considering also how much it makes both to whet on the diligence of the ministers, and to enforce the diligence of the people, whilst these on the one side consider with themselves, how they have them set over them, whom above others themselves have liked, and made choice of; and they on the other side, that they are set over those by whom they before others were made choice of, and elected: that which Cyprian hath,* seemeth most equal, and of institution moral, and unchangeable, that "the commonalty fearing God and keeping his commandments, should have the special hand either in choosing of worthy priests, or ministers, or of rejecting the unworthy: which also," saith he, "we see to be founded upon Divine authority."

The same is to be held of excommunication. Seeing that it behoveth the Christian multitude to avoid the fellowship of the excommunicated, not only in the course of religion, but even in common and familiar conversation, (the rights of nature, family, and commonwealth ever kept inviolated): and that whom yesterday I was to repute a brother near and dear in Christ, to-morrow I must hold as a "heathen and publican," and as, "for the destruction of the flesh, delivered to Satan," Matt. xviii. 17; 1 Cor. v. 5: who is so unequal a judge as not to think it a most equal thing, that the multitude should clearly, and undoubtedly, take knowledge both of the heinousness of the crime, and

* Cypr. Epist. 4, lib. iv. 1.

Hosted by Google

incorrigible contumacy of the person, after the use of all means and remedies for reclaiming him. This, if it be not done, then doth not the church herein live by her own, but by her officers' faith, neither are her governors to be reputed as servants, but lords unto her; neither do they exercise their office popularly in the church as they ought, but tyrannically, as they ought not, by Chrysostom's verdict. His words are these:* "He who bears himself upon an external and worldly power, because he rules legally, and that men must of necessity obey him, doth ofttimes, and that not without cause, exercise authority against the will, and well-liking of his subjects. But on the other side, he who will be over those, who voluntarily submit unto him, and can him thank, and yet will presume to do things as himself liketh, and as if he were to give account to none other thereof, that man rather exerciseth his authority tyrannically than popularly."

The Lord God put it into the hearts of those who bear greatest sway in the reformed churches, to endeavour the furnishing of the same with such elders, as may both fully, and constantly, and popularly, discharge their place, for the peace of their own consciences before God, the edification of the churches over which they are set, as also for the abating, if not abolishing, of that contempt in which prelatists and supercilious persons use to hold these lay-elders, as they call them.

But now lest any should take occasion, either by the things here spoken by us, or elsewhere of us, to conceive, that we either exercise amongst ourselves, or would thrust upon others, any popular, or democratical church government; may it please the Christian reader to make estimate of both our judgment and practice in this point, according to these three declarations following.

First, We believe, that the external church government under Christ, the only mediator and monarch thereof, is plainly aristocratical, and to be administered by some certain choice men, although the state, which many unskilfully confound with the government, be after a sort popular and democratical.† By this it appertains to the people

* Chrysost. in Epist. ad Titum.

† Bodinum de Repub., lib. 2, cap. ult.

Hosted by Google

freely to vote in elections and judgments of the church: in respect of the other, we make account it behoves the elders to govern the people, even in their voting, in just liberty, given by Christ whatsoever. 1 Cor. xii. 28; 1 Tim. v. 17; Heb. xiii. 17. Let the elders publicly propound, and order all things in the church, and so give their sentence on them; let them reprove them that sin, convince the gainsayers, comfort the repentant, and so administer all things according to the prescript of God's Word: let the people of faith give their assent to their elders' holy and lawful administration: that so the ecclesiastical elections and censures may be ratified, and put into solemn execution by the elders, either in the ordination of officers after election, or excommunication of offenders after obstinacy in sin.

2. We doubt not but that the elders both lawfully may, and necessarily ought, and that by virtue of their office, to meet apart at times from the body of the church, to deliberate of such things as concern her welfare, as for the preventing of things unnecessary, so for the preparing, according to just order, of things necessary, so as publicly, and before the people, they may be prosecuted with most conveniency, and least trouble, that may be. Acts xx. 18.

3. By the people whose liberty, and right in voting, we thus avow, and stand for, in matters truly public and ecclesiastical, we do not understand, as it hath pleased some contumeliously to upbraid us, women, and children; but only men, and them grown, and of discretion: making account, that as children by their nonage, so women by their sex are debarred of the use of authority in the church. 1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35; 1 Tim. ii. 12.

CHAPTER V.

OF HOLY DAYS.

It seemeth not without all leaven of superstition, that the Dutch reformed churches do observe certain days consecrated as holy to the nativity, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, and the same also (as it commonly comes to pass where human devices are reared up by the side of

Hosted by Google

Divine institutions) much more holy than the Lord's-day, by him himself appointed.

And for this, first we are taught by Moses, thus speaking unto the people of Israel in the name of the Lord: "Verily, my Sabbaths ye shall keep; for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you," Exod. xxxi. 13, that it appertains unto God alone (and to no man, or angel) as to sanctify whether person, or thing, so to institute the signs, or means of sanctification, of which number holy days are. I add, if the Lord as Jehovah, and the God of his people Israel, Exod. xx. 8, and supreme lawgiver, do ordain the sanctification of a day in the 'decalogue, how far should God's servants be, either magistrates from taking this honour of God unto themselves by commanding a holy day; or subjects by observing it, to give the same unto any other save God alone?

2. It was not the least part of Israel's defection, first in the wilderness, afterwards under Jeroboam, that they ordained a feast to Jehovah, whom they represented to themselves by the golden calves which they had made.

3. Seeing that every first day of the week, called by John, the Lord's-day, is consecrated by Christ himself and his apostles to the memorial of Christ's resurrection, and God's solemn worship; it seems too much for any mortal man to appoint, or make an anniversary memorial, and the same most solemn and sacred, of the same resurrection, or so to observe it.

Lastly. That you may see it was a man, from whom this device came, and so erred, as one saith, (not to meddle with the uncertainty either of the day of the month, or month of the year in which Christ was born, as it is most certain on the contrary that this twenty-fifth of December cannot be the time), what good reason, I would know, can be rendered, why a day should be consecrated rather to the birth, circumcision, and ascension of Christ, than to his death, seeing that the Scriptures everywhere do ascribe our redemption and salvation to his death, and passion in special manner?

Hosted by Google

CHAPTER VI.

OF THE CELEBRATION OF MARRIAGE BY THE PASTORS OF THE CHURCH.

SIXTHLY, and lastly. We cannot assent to the received opinion and practice answerable in the reformed churches, by which the pastors thereof do celebrate marriage publicly, and by virtue of their office: because,

1. The Holy Scripture divinely inspired, that the man of God, that is the minister, may be perfectly furnished to every good work, doth no where furnish or oblige the minister to this work. 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.

2. Marriage doth, properly and immediately, appertain to the family, which is primarily framed of man and wife,* and cities, and other political bodies consisting of many families. Secondarily and immediately, to the commonwealth, and public governors of the same: who, therefore, weighing their office, and what concerneth them do accordingly, in the Low Countries, comelily and in good order tie that knot of that marriage amongst such their subjects, as require it at their hands. Neither did God as a minister join in marriage our first parents, as some would make him, but as their common father by right of creation, and the chief master of the marriage,† Gen. i. 27; ii. 22; neither ought the pastor's office to be stretched to any other acts than those of religion, and such as are peculiar to Christians: amongst which marriage, common to Gentiles as well as to them, hath no place.‡

Lastly. Considering how popish superstition hath so far prevailed, that marriage in the Romish church hath got a room amongst the sacraments, truly and properly so called, and by Christ the Lord instituted; § the celebration, and consecration whereof the patrons, and consorts of that superstition will have so tied to the priests' fingers, that by the decree of Evaristus the First, they account the marriage no better than incestuous, which the priest con-

* Keckerm. Curs. Phyl. Disp. 28, c. 6.

† Chem. Exam. part. 2. de Mar. ‡ Bucanus in loc. Com.

§ Trident. Conc. Can. 1. de Sac. Matri. Polyd. Virgil. v. de Invent. Rerum, v. 5.

Hosted by Google

secrates not; it the more concerns the reverend brethren, and pastors of the reformed churches to see unto it, that by their practice they neither do, nor seem to advantage this popish error.

And these are the points of our difference from the Belgic churches, which are neither so small, as that they deserve to be neglected; especially of them unto whom nothing seemeth small, which proceeds from the gracious either mouth or Spirit of the Lord Jesus: nor yet so great, as to dissolve the bond of brotherly charity, and communion.

If any now shall object, that there are yet other things beside these, in which we consort not so well with them, nor they with us; as for example:—1. In the sanctification of the Lord's-day, in which we seem even superstitiously rigid. 2. In a certain popular exercise of prophecy amongst us. 3. In our dislike of the public temples, and sundry other indifferent things, as they are termed; besides, that we are accused by some for not having in due estimation the magistrate's authority in matters of religion; I do answer, and first, that in the two first of these, the same churches do not differ from us in judgment, but in practice: as appears evidently by the harmony of the Belgic synods, lately published by S. R. Of the former of those two, the author of the same book, testifieth in his preface to the reader, that the Synod held at Middleburgh in Zealand, 1581, did supplicate unto the magistrate, that by his authority he would decree the sanctification of the Lord's-day, abolishing the manifold abuses thereof. That sanctification then of the Lord's-day which the reformed churches do endeavour unto, and desire to have fortified by the magistrate's authority, that, we, considering it as immediately imposed by Christ upon his churches, by the grace of God, labour to perform, being thereunto induced by the following, amongst other reasons.

CHAPTER VII.

OF THE SANCTIFICATION OF THE LORD'S DAY.

First, The sanctification of the Sabbath is a part of the

Hosted by Google

decalogue, or moral law, written in tables of stone by the finger of God: of which Christ our Lord pronounceth, that "no one jot or tittle shall pass away." Matt. v. 18. Now if it be impossible for one tittle of the law to be dissolved, much more for a whole word, or commandment, and one of ten; by which it should come to pass, that Christians now were not to count of ten commandments of the moral law, but of nine only.

If reply be made that the fourth commandment is so ceremonial, that notwithstanding it hath this moral in it, that some time be assigned, and taken for the public ministry, and exercises of religion, I answer:

1. That the same may be said in general, of the Mosaical ceremonies whatsoever: all, and every one whereof affordeth something moral. For instance, the Mosaical temple, or tabernacle had this moral in it, and pertaining to us, as well as to the Israelites, that it was a fit and convenient place for the church assembly. Is therefore the precept for the tabernacle as well moral, as that for the Sabbath? Exod. xxv. and xxvi. Is it alike a part of the decalogue, and moral law? Is it alike one of the ten commandments? Exod. xx.

2. If the moral sanctification of the Sabbath stand in this, that some time be assigned to the public ministry, then were the Israelites, especially the priests, and Levites, bound to an every-day Sabbath and sanctification moral, being bound every day to offer in the tabernacle, and temple, two young lambs, the one at morning, the other at evening for a daily sacrifice. Numb. xxviii. 3, 4.

3. If the second precept of the decalogue do in the affirmative part enjoin all outward instituted worship of God; then also by consequence it requires some set time, as a natural circumstance absolutely necessary to every finite action, in which the same worship is to be performed. In vain then is the fourth commandment, and to no purpose, if it enjoin nothing at all, but that which was enjoined before, namely in the second.

4. The very essence of the fourth commandment consists in this, that a day of seven be kept holy, that is separated from common use, and consecrated to God, in which as in a holy day the works of Divine worship, and

Hosted by Google

such as serve for the spiritual man ought to be exercised, as appears plainly by the reason taken from God's example, upon which the commandment is founded. Take this away, and the life of the precept seemeth to suffer violence. The truly godly take some time for the exercises of God's worship not only public, and ecclesiastical, but private also, and domestical: yea in their closets, as Christ teacheth. Matt. vi. 6. Yet are not these either times or places, in which such things are done, than others are. Either therefore a day in itself must be holy, by Divine institution, or the decalogue is maimed in the fourth commandment.

But you will doubtless object the change made from the last day, to the first day of the week. I answer, 1, That change is merely circumstantial, and in which also the essence of the precept is not abolished, but established. As for example. God promised unto children duly honouring their parents a long life in that land, Exod. xx. 12, to wit of Canaan, then to be possessed by his people, "which the Lord thy God gave unto them." The same promise by the apostle's testimony still stands good to obedient children, Ephes. vi. 2, though out of Canaan, and in another land, so doth the same precept stand in force for the sanctification of the Sabbath, though removed to another of the seven days by the Lord's hand.

2. It is evident that this alteration was made both upon weighty ground, and warrantable authority. The ground is Christ our Saviour's resurrection from the dead: in which man's new creation, (at least in respect of Christ working the same in the state of humiliation for that end undertaken) was perfected: a new kind of kingdom of God, Luke vii. 28, after a sort established: and, as the Scriptures speak, all things made new. And why not also a new Sabbath after a sort? in which yet notwithstanding the former, as the creation also by Christ, is not so properly abolished, as perfected.

The authority upon which this change leaneth, is no less than of Christ himself: who, first, by word of mouth for the forty days after his resurrection, taught the disciples the things, which appertained to the kingdom of God, that is, as Calvin saith,* "Whatsoever things they published

* Calv. in Acts i. 3.

Hosted by Google

either by word or writing afterward." 2. By his example, or fact, setting himself in the midst of the same his apostles, the first day of the week, John xx. 19, 26; Luke xxiv. 36, and as Junius saith,* every eighth day, till his ascension into heaven: and therein not only blessing them with his bodily, but much more, with his spiritual, and that special presence. 3. By his Spirit speaking in his apostles, whose office it was to teach his disciples to observe what things soever he had commanded them, and to declare unto them the whole counsel of God: who also in their whole ministration were to be reputed none other than the ministers of Christ; Matt. xxviii. 20; Acts xx. 27; 1 Cor. iv. 1; and lastly, whose both writing (and preachings accordingly) even about order and comeliness to be kept in the church exercises were the commandments of the Lord Jesus. 1 Cor. xiv. 37. Agreeable hereunto it was, that the Apostle Paul coming to Troas, and there with his company abiding seven days, he did not till the first day of the week, which yet was the last of the seven, call together the disciples to eat bread, that is to communicate in the Lord's Supper. Acts xx. 6, 7. Hereupon also it was, that the same apostle ordained, that on every first day of the week, 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2, as on a day sanctified for the holy assemblies, and fittest for most effectual provocations to the supplying of the necessities of the poor saints, every one of the richer sort should lay something apart, as God had blessed him, for the relief of the churches in Syria, at that time oppressed with great penury, and want. Lastly, Upon none other ground but this, was this day, by John the Apostle, named expressly the Lord's-day, Rev. i. 10, as being consecrated to the resurrection and service of the Lord Jesus: for which end also it was kept in the primitive churches, as appeareth by most ancient and authentic writers.† Neither did Patmos more distinctly denote a certain and known island, and John a certain and known person, than did the Lord's-day a day certain, and known especially unto Christians, unto whom the apostle wrote.

* Junius in Gen. ii. 2.

† Ignat. ad Magnes. Just. Martyr, Apol. 2. Tertull. de Idol. Euseb. l. 4, 2, de Dionys.

Hosted by Google

Whereunto also agreeth that of Austin.* This Lord's-day is therefore so called, because on that day the Lord rose again, or that by the very name it might teach us, how it ought to be consecrated to the Lord.

The second reason is, because the sanctification of the Sabbath, the circumstantial change notwithstanding, doth as well belong to us in our times, as to the Israelites in theirs; whether we respect the reason of the commandment, or the end. The reason is taken from the example of God himself, who rested the seventh day from the works of creation. The ends are, 1. That we framing ourselves to God's example, after six days spent in servile works, or works of acquisition, might rest the seventh. 2. That we might recount with ourselves, not only with thankful, but also composed hearts, as the creation of man, and of all other things for man's good, so also his re-creation, and renovation clearly shining in the resurrection of Christ from the dead. 1 Pet. i. 3. 3. That sequestring our hearts, tongues, and hands from every servile work, so far as human infirmity will bear, we might consecrate unto God a certain and set time and day, for the works of piety towards him, and of charity towards men. Isa. lviii. 13. And albeit the state of Israel of old compared with ours, was childish, and elementary, and so needed the more helps both for restraint and supportance, Gal. iv. 1; yet have not we attained to such manlike perfection, as that we need none at all in this kind.

And not to meddle with the rabble of Christians, whose aversion from the due sanctification of this day gives no obscure testimony, that the same is sacred and of God, from which their profane conversation so much abhorreth, how behoveful and necessary it is for the true worshippers of God, that for some certain, and whole day they should empty and disburden their hearts of their earthly cares, though in themselves lawful, that so they might wholly consecrate themselves to God, publicly in his house, and privately in their own; partly by preparing themselves, and theirs for the public worship, and ministry, and partly by calling to mind in themselves, and instructing, and examining of those which belong unto them, as they ought,

* August. de Verb. Apost. Serm. 15.

Hosted by Google

touching the things which they have publicly heard; as also in meditating of the most glorious works of God's hands, the very experience of every godly and devout man may teach him. He that sells himself to the holy, and severe observations of this the Lord's sabbath, "turning away his foot from the Sabbath, not to do that wherein he delighteth on the Lord's holy day, and calling the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, and honourable, and shall honour him, not doing his own ways, nor performing his own pleasure, or speaking his own words; then shall he delight himself in the Lord, and he will cause him to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed him with the heritage of Jacob his father, because the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." Isa. lviii. 13, 14. Whereas on the contrary, no man doth or can neglect the same without apparent prejudice and wrong to piety and goodness both in himself, and those under him. To let pass other things, how easily doth this thought steal into the heart not thoroughly persuaded of the holiness of this day? What now! There is in the day no holiness by God's appointment, save only, as in it, the public sermons of the church with prayer and thanksgiving are to be frequented, and performed: for me to be present at every sermon, specially made in city, both on the Lord's-day, and every other day of the week, my special calling, and worldly affairs will not permit: besides, it were very commodious for me on this Lord's-day, to make an end of such or such a work which I have in hand, to deal in such a business, to undertake such a journey; and what should hinder me from so doing? But provided always, upon this condition, that look what this day wants, the morrow, or next day shall plentifully supply: or, if it so fall out, through mine importunate business, that I be something more behind this week in these things, I will certainly, and at the furthest, the next week be so much the more frequent in them, and so make God, and my soul amends. And why, as is the guise of ill debtors, will not men desire, and take longer day, even to months, and years also? considering how on the one side the heart of man is daily faster taken and held by the bait of worldly profit and pleasure: and on the other, less affectioned to God's Holy Word, by the less

Hosted by Google

frequent hearing of it. And hence, alas, cometh it to pass, that true piety languisheth so much in the most, and with it such other Christian virtues as use to accompany it. Hence flow those tears of sorrow, and lamenting, which no true Christian casting his eyes upon the reformed churches can forbear.

The third reason is taken from that apostolical determination, wrested by many to a contrary meaning, Col. ii. 16, 17, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or drink, or in respect of a feast or new moon, or sabbaths; which are the shadow of good things to come, but the body is Christ." Whence it appeareth more than plainly, that only those Sabbaths are abolished by Christ's coming in the flesh, which were types and figures of Christ to come, of which sort as there were not a few instituted of God by Moses, so doth this apostle here, and elsewhere sufficiently declare the abrogating, and abolishing of the same by Christ. But that the Sabbath of which we now speak comes in that reckoning we plainly deny.

For, 1. In its primary institution, Gen. ii., there can nothing be found not wholly moral. Let a man having many eyes as Argus, search the same with a candle, he seeks, as we say, a knot in a bulrush, if he think to find in it any either shadow of Christ, or shadow of shadow. If any shall except, that God by Moses did enjoin unto the Israelites the sanctification of this day, "that it might be a sign between him and Israel throughout their generations, that they might know that he is the Lord that doth sanctify them." Exod. xxxi. 13. I do answer, first, in the words of Arminius, that "the reason upon which God did afterwards commend unto his people, the sanctification of the sabbath because it was a sign between God and his people, that it was Jehovah that sanctified them, may be applied to the times of the new testament, and further, with them also, the sabbath's sanctification."* 2. Admit that this use were ceremonial, and typical in the fourth commandment, yet were there no force in the consequence from one end and use typical and ceremonial, superinduced, and brought in upon the precept, to prove the precept itself ceremonial and typical in the institution. By the same

* Armin. in Theol. Disp. Priv. pp. 186, 187.

Hosted by Google

reason it may be affirmed, that both the covenant of God made with Abraham, "I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed," as also the right of the first-born, Gen. xlix. 3; for a double portion, and many things more of like consideration, were merely ceremonial and typical, seeing that even unto them also, were annexed, and that by God's appointment, divers typical and temporal respects: of which notwithstanding none soundly minded will deny, that the one is evangelical, and the other natural. Gal. iii. 8, 16, 17. 3. Considering that the observation of this sabbath was either enjoined, as I persuade myself it was from Gen. ii. 1—3, and Exod. xvi. 26, 30, to Adam, in innocency and not yet needing Christ; or at least, that the reason of the institution did fit the state of innocency as well, as it did the Israelites afterward, I do undoubtedly conclude, that the same Sabbath in the primary, and essential institution thereof is not to come upon their file, which as the shadows of future things had Christ for the body.

Fourthly, I argue from that premonition of Christ, Matt. xxiv. 20, "Pray that your flight be not in winter nor on the Sabbath." I am not ignorant how the most divines both ancient, and later do understand this sermon, as Chrysostom saith, as made of the Jews; seeing that, as the same author hath it, "neither the apostles did observe the Sabbath-day, neither yet were they in Judea when these things were done of the Romans: many of them having departed this life, and the rest, (if any survived) having bestowed themselves in other places."* But, with due reverence to them all be it spoken, it seemeth by the text to be otherwise. For 1. Christ made not this sermon to the Jews, as Jews, but to his disciples, and those alone, and the same coming unto him secretly to be taught by him: ver. 3; whom he forewarned in the same place how that first at the hands of the Jews in Judea, and after, of the Gentiles everywhere, they should be evil intreated for his name's sake, verses 3, 4, 9, 25, 26, with Luke xxi. 12. Secondly, Our Saviour in saying "Pray ye," makes it plain, that he speaks of them, and their associates unto whom he speaks, to wit, Christians. Lastly, How could it be that Christ, who by his death, now drawing so near as that

* Chrysost. Hom. 77, ex Matt. xxiv.

Hosted by Google

there was but a step unto it, was to abrogate, and abolish all Jewish ceremonies, and shadows, should so carefully provide for the so religious observation of a shadowish and ceremonial Sabbath: and that not for a day or two, but for so many years after the same his death? Could anything more weighty be spoken by Christ, or which could more deeply imprint in the hearts of men a religious regard of the Sabbath, than that it behoved them to obtain by prayer at God's hands, that they might not be constrained unto that thing although permitted them of God in case of urgent necessity, which might violate and interrupt the public and solemn sanctification thereof? It is true then which Chrysostom saith, that the apostles did not observe the Sabbath, to wit, Jewish: but the Christian Sabbath, or Lord's-day, they did undoubtedly celebrate.

The fifth and last reason may be fetched from the very Gentiles themselves, who directed by the glimpse of the light of nature, how darkly soever shining in them, had their holy days, and some of the same such, as in which not so much as the pleading and determining of suits were admitted.* It seemeth natural that some day, and moral that some day certain and distinct, be sacred unto God: and the same, as Junius saith,† every seventh day: in which men forbearing all servile works, may consecrate, and give themselves to God in the duties of piety, and of charity to men. Which with what hinderance unto the one and other, is everywhere neglected, can scarce either be uttered, or conceived. For what marvel if upon the overslipping of the most seasonable seed-time, a slender harvest follow; or that, the market day being neglected, penury of provision should be found in the family; we Christians have the Lord's-day by the Lord Christ assigned us for the exercises of piety, and mercy, in which he offers, and exhibits himself in the fruits of his gracious presence in a singular manner to be seen, and enjoyed of his, religiously observing the same. Let us at no hand, as alike unmindful of God's ordinance and man's infirmity, suffer the fruit of such a benefit to die in our hands: but let us accordingly acknowledge the same in thought, word, and work, to his honour, and our own good.

* Varro, lib. 3, de Ling. lat. † Junius in Gen. ii. 2.

Hosted by Google

CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE EXERCISE OF PROPHECY.

THERE are they, whose names I forbear, for their credit's sake, who have not spared, and that in their public writings, to lay to our charge, that we will needs have all and every member of the church, a prophet, and to prophesy publicly. With what minds they let loose their tongues to utter these, and many more most false and absurd vituperies against us, we leave it to God to judge, who knoweth: with what conscience, and desert of credit therein, unto thee, Christian reader, into whose hands this our Apology shall come.

We learn from the apostle Paul, 1 Cor. xiv. 3, that "he who prophesieth, speaketh unto men to edification, exhortation, and comfort:" which to perform conveniently, and as becomes the church assembly, we make account comes within the compass but of a few of the multitude; happily two or three in each of our churches, considering their weak and depressed state. Touching prophecy then we think the very same, that the synod held at Embden, 1571, hath decreed in these words: "1. In in all churches, whether but springing up, or grown to some ripeness, let the order of prophecy be observed, according to Paul's institution. 2. Into the fellowship of this work are to be admitted not only the ministers, but the teachers too, as also the elders and deacons, yea, even of the multitude, which are willing to confer their gift received of God, to the common utility of the church: but so as they first be allowed by the judgment of the ministers, and others."* And as the apostle sometimes said, "We believe, and therefore we speak," 2 Cor. iv. 13, so because we believe with the Belgic churches, that this exercise is to be observed in all congregations, therefore we also observe it in ours. Of this our both faith and practice, we have these amongst other special foundations.

The first we fetch from examples in the Jewish church, where liberty both for teaching and disputing publicly both in the temple and synagogue, was freely given to all gifted

* Harm. Synod. Belg. pp. 21, 22.

Hosted by Google

accordingly, without respect had to any office. Luke ii. 46, 47; iv. 15, 16; Acts viii. 4, 11, 19—21; xiii. 14—16; xviii. 24—26.

If any object, that the examples of Christ and the apostles in this case, are incompetent, seeing that Christ was furnished with his own, and the apostles with his authority; he allegeth that which is true in itself, but to small purpose, considering we lay not our foundation in this, that Christ and his apostles so did; but in that liberty so to do was always had, in all places granted, and sometimes offered them. This liberty they obtained not by the authority of Christ, which the rulers of the synagogues and temple no more acknowledged than they did Christ himself: but by the order then received, and still continued to this day amongst the Jews, that they whom, with the Scriptures, they call "wise men," Jer. xviii. 18; Matt. xxiii. 34; 1 Cor. i. 20, without all regard of public office, having any word of exhortation to the people, should "say on," as we have it written, Acts xiii. 23. Whereunto I add, that divers of them, in whom we instance, were furnished with no such authority specially from Christ.

The second we take from the apostle Paul, 1 Cor. xiv., where to the full he informeth the church at Corinth of the order of that exercise, which they had formerly violated. Which whole order, according to Beza on 1 Cor. xiv., is apparently taken from the received custom in the Jewish synagogues. Which custom, saith Peter Martyr on 1 Cor. xiv. 31, seeing it was of old both good and laudable in the synagogues of the Jews, the apostle disdains not to transfer it to the Church of Christ, of which also he renders this reason, because it was not a legal ceremony, but serves to the edification of the church. If this be so, then must they needs take their marks amiss, who imagine that the apostle in this place speaks of the extraordinary gift and exercise of prophecy. And although it be not like, that the Church of Corinth was, in that so plenteous effusion of the gifts of the Spirit, altogether destitute of extraordinary prophets, yet that the apostle did not in that place aim at them, may be proved by many more, and the same, as I think, firm arguments drawn from the selfsame text. Which that I may do the more commodiously, the prudent reader must

Hosted by Google

call to mind, that upon the foundation of the extraordinary prophets, as well as of the very apostles, the church is built, Eph. ii. 20; and that that mystery of Christ, by the Spirit immediately and infallibly enlightening their mind, was in the same manner, though not in all the same degree, revealed to them, and the other. Eph. iii. 4, 5.

This so considered, 1. It seems altogether improbable, that so many prophets of this rank, although inferior in gifts, should have been found in that one small congregation, as the apostle insinuates, ver. 24, 29, 31, that Corinth had.

2. The prophets in Corinth not only behaved themselves inordinately in the church, but withal, as by interpreters from ver. 29 and 32, is generally delivered, were subject to error in the very doctrine which they propounded; which to affirm of the extraordinary prophets, those skilful master builders, who together with the apostles laid the foundation, together participated the same holy Spirit, seemeth not a little to shake the foundation of the Christian religion. And if one of these extraordinary prophets might err, why not they all? And if the prophets, why not the apostles? And if they might err, how should it appear, that they have not erred? And so by consequence, what either then was, or now is, the firmness and certainty of the Christian faith?

3. Seeing that the apostle, ver. 34, 35, enjoins women deep silence in this church exercise, not permitting them at all to speak; it seems most plain that he hath no eye, nor respect at all, to those extraordinary gifts and endowments of prophecy authorising even women furnished with them, to speak publicly, and in men's presence, as appears in Miriam, Deborah, Huldah, Anna, as also even in Jezebel herself in regard of order, and others. Exod. xv. 21; Judges v. 1; 2 Kings xxii. 14; Luke ii. 36; Rev. ii. 20.

Lastly, The apostle, ver. 36, upbraideth those very prophets unto whom he directeth his speech, as such as from whom the Word of God came not: but without cause, yea, not without notable injury, if they were extraordinary prophets, that is, inspired with the Holy Ghost, and his immediate instruments: seeing that from these kind of prophets, as well as from Paul the apostle, the Word of God came, though in a different degree and measure.

Hosted by Google

The third foundation of this exercise is laid in the manifold, and the same most excellent ends attainable only by this means. 1. That "God may be glorified, whilst every one doth administer to another the gift which he hath received, as good dispensers of the manifold grace of God." 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11. 2. That "the Spirit be not extinguished," 1 Thess. v. 19, 20, that is, the gift of prophecy, or teaching; in which it may so come to pass, that some in the church, though no ministers, may excel the very pastors themselves. 3. That such as are to be taken into the ministry of the church, may both become and appear "apt to teach." 1 Tim. i. 3. This seeing, the apostle would have done, he would questionless have some order for the doing of it; which, excepting this of prophecy, we have none of apostolical institution. 4. That the doctrine of the church may be preserved pure, from the infection of error: which is far more easily corrupted, when some one or two alone in the church speak all, and all the rest have deep and perpetual silence enjoined them. 1 John iv. 1; Rev. ii. 2, 7, with i. 11.* 5. That things doubtful arising in teaching may be cleared, things obscure opened, things erroneous convinced; and lastly, that as by the beating together of two stones fire appeareth, so may the light of the truth more clearly shine by disputations, questions, and answers modestly had and made, and as becomes the church of saints, and work of God.† Luke ii. 40; iv. 21, 22; Acts xvii. 2; xviii. 24, 26, 28. 6. For the edification of the church, and conversion of them that believe not: and this the rather because it appertaineth not properly to the pastors, as pastors, to turn goats or wolves into sheep, but rather to feed the flock and sheep of Christ, in which the Holy Ghost hath made them overseers. 1 Cor. xiv. 4, 24, 25; Acts xx. 28.‡ 7. And lastly, Lest by excluding the commonalty and multitude from church affairs, the people of God be divided, and charity lessened, and familiarity and good-will be extinguished between the order of ministers and people.§

* Jacob A. cont. Stratag. Sath. pp. 168, 169.
† Eus. Eccl. His. l. 6, c. 32, 36.
‡ Sadeel. adv. Turr. Soph. pp. 67, 68.
§ Pet. Mart. in 1 Cor. xiv. 29.

Hosted by Google

CHAPTER IX.

OF TEMPLES.

To speak nothing of the office of the Christian magistrate in demolishing the monuments and snares of idolatry, which these temples want not, if themselves be not such, I account that the consideration is one of a temple, as a temple, that is, a holy place, as it is counted of the most, consecrated either to God himself, or to some saint made therein a false god, though being a true saint, whose name it bears; and which for its magnificent building, and superstitious form agrees far better to the Romish religion, pompous and idolatrous as it is, than to the reformed, and apostolical simplicity. And another, and the same far diverse, of a place, although in the house sometimes consecrated for such a temple, partly natural, which is simply necessary to every finite action; partly civil, in which the church may well, and conveniently assemble together. The former use I deem altogether unlawful; the latter not so, but lawful, provided always that the opinion of holiness be removed, and withal such blemishes of superstition, as wherewith things lawful in themselves are usually stained.*

CHAPTER X.

OF THINGS INDIFFERENT.

We do so repute many things as indifferent, or mean in themselves and their own nature, and as holding a middle place as it were, between the things simply commanded, and the things simply forbidden of God, as that the same things being once drawn into use, and practice, do necessarily undergo the respect and consideration of good or evil. This the apostle teacheth, 1 Cor. xiv., in his so diligently warning the church of Corinth, that all things be done decently, in order, and to edification. The things then thus accounted indifferent, when they once come into use in the church, do either work the exercises of religion

* Calv. in Psa. cii. 15; Pet. Mart. in 2 Kings x. 27; Joh. Wolfius in 2 Kings xvii. 19; xix. 6.

Hosted by Google

the more comely, orderly, and edificative, and are such as without which, the same exercises cannot be performed but confusedly, uncomelily, and unfruitfully, at least in part, or else they swerve from the apostolical canon. With this commandment of the apostle, yea of Christ the Lord, agrees the rule of the philosophers, the accessory followeth the nature of the principal. For example. Let the principal, as they speak, be some natural good thing, the very least accessory or circumstance, by which this principle is rightly and orderly furthered, and promoted undergoes also the consideration of a natural good. The same rule holds in actions civil: much more in the things, which appertain to religion, and God's worship. I therefore conclude, that the least rite or ceremony serving rightly and orderly to further the principal act and exercise of religion, doth worthily obtain, after a sort, the respect and denomination of a religious, and ecclesiastical good thing: which principal act, if it do not truly and effectually promote and advance, it is a vain addition at the best, beseeming only vain purposes, and persons, which "worship God in vain, teaching for doctrines men's traditions," Matt. xv. 9: seeing whatsoever is to be done in the church, is also, and first to be taught, that so it may be done.

2. Whatsoever hath being in nature, is some certain thing first, and properly, and to be reduced to some certain and distinct head. Now all things whatsoever in use, either in, or about God's worship, may and must be referred necessarily to some one of these three heads. Either they are things natural, and simply necessary to the exercise; of which sort are the natural circumstances of time, and place, without which no finite action can be performed: also for the administering of baptism, either a font or other vessel to hold water: and so for other adjuncts absolutely necessary for the administering of the holy things of the church: or secondly, they are things civil, and comely: as for example, a convenient place in which the church may conveniently, and comelily meet together, not a stable, or swine-stye, also that habit of the minister, that covering of the Lord's table, those ministering vessels, and other accessories and appurtenances whatsoever, without which the holy things of God cannot be

Hosted by Google

dispensed so civilly, and comely, as is meet. Or lastly, they are properly things sacred, and holy, and by consequence, parts of external Divine worship: and the same either commanded by God, and so lawful, or of man's device, and therefore superstitious.

Now if any shall further ask me, what power then I ascribe either to the civil magistrate, or church-governors for making laws about things indifferent? I answer touching church-governors first, being to treat by and by of the magistrate, that no such power, to speak properly, belongs unto them; as being not lords but servants of the church, under Christ the only Lord thereof: Ezek. xliv. 11; Matt. xx. 25; 2 Cor. iv. 5; 1 Pet. v. 3: exercising, as saith Austin, from Christ and the apostles a ministry, not a lordship:* and who therefore are to learn, if they will be content with their scantling, which God hath allowed them, that a weeding-hook better becomes them, than a sceptre as Bernard speaketh.† For to make laws by all men's grant, belongs to them, and them only, who do sway sceptres, or are lords at least.

Moreover the Holy Scriptures everywhere teach, that the highest church-officers, and governors are but ambassadors of God, and interpreters, and proclaimers or criers of his Word. But "neither an ambassador, nor interpreter, nor crier, no, nor the herald, the most honourable of all proclaimers, or publishers of edicts, can command anything, nor dispose of the least matter by his own authority," as Junius saith rightly.‡ It is certain, that the governors of churches do stand in need of wisdom and discretion for the applying and determining of the common rules of order and comeliness taken from the Scripture, and common sense, to certain cases, and according to certain circumstances. But what makes this for the power of making laws in the church? which as Mr. Perkins § makes account, is a part of Christ's prerogative royal: considering withal, that neither the church, nor the meanest member thereof is further bound unto these their determinations, than they appear to agree with order, and comeliness: neither are the ministers in anything at all, as are the magistrates

* August. de Civit. Dei, l. 19. † Bern. de Conf. lib. 2.
‡ Junius contr. 3, lib. 5, c. 7. § Perk. Gold. Chain, c. 18.

Hosted by Google

in many things, to be obeyed for the authority of the commander, but for the reason of the commandment,* which the ministers are also bound in duty to manifest, and approve unto the consciences of them over whom they are set.

CHAPTER XI.

OF CIVIL MAGISTRATES.

We believe the very same, touching the civil magistrate, with the Belgic reformed churches, and willingly subscribe to their confession; and the more, because what is by many restrained to the Christian magistrate, they extend indefinitely and absolutely to the magistrate whomsoever. And that surely upon good ground: seeing the magistracy is one, and the power the same, whether the person be Christian or heathen; neither is there wanting in an heathen magistrate, that he might rule as he ought, authority of order, but will of person: neither is his power increased by the accession of Christianity, but only sanctified, as is first his person. The prince rules over his subjects as he is a prince, and they subjects simply, not as faithful or christian, he or they. Only Christ, the Lord of our faith, hath the faithful, as faithful, for his subjects: "neither are the subjects of kings, as subjects, any part of the church, but of the kingdom."†

Besides, there is one and the same Christian faith of the prince and subject, and all things common unto both, which spring from the same; seeing that in Christ Jesus there is neither servant nor freeman: I add, neither magistrate nor subject, but all are one in him. As therefore none, no, not the least power of public administration comes to the subjects by their Christianity, so neither is the prince's thereby at all increased. And, indeed, how can it? The magistrate, though a heathen, hath power as the minister of God for the good of his subjects, Rom. xiii. 4, to command and procure in and by good and lawful manner and means, whatsoever appertains either to

* Zach. Ursinus Catach. on 2 Com.

† Episc. Cicen. ad Tort. p. 35.

Hosted by Google

their natural or spiritual life, so the same be not contrary to God's Word: upon which Word of God if it beat, God forbid that the Christian magistrate should take liberty to use, or rather abuse, his authority for the same; which yet if he do either the one or the other, whether by commanding what God forbids, or by forbidding what God commands, seeing it comes by the fault of the person, not of the office, the subject is not freed from the bond of allegiance, but is still tied to obedience as active for the doing of the thing commanded, if it be lawful; so passive, if unlawful, by suffering patiently the punishment, though unjustly inflicted.

Lastly, If any civil and coactive power in things, whether civil or ecclesiastical, come to the magistrate by his Christianity, then if it so fall out that he make defection from the same, whether by idolatry, or heresy, or profaneness, it must follow that thereupon his kingly power is diminished and abridged; whereby how wide a window, or gate rather, would be opened to seditious subjects, under pretext of (specially catholic) religion, to raise tumults in kingdoms, no man can be ignorant.

CHAPTER XII.

OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND,

THERE remains one, and that a great matter of exception against us, and the same the fountain well-nigh of all our calamity: to wit, that we seem evil affected towards the Church of England, and so averse from the same, as that we do no less than make a plain secession and separation from it.

I answer, first, That our faith is not negative, as papists used to object to the evangelical churches; nor which consists in the condemning of others, and wiping their names out of the bead-roll of churches, but in the edifying of ourselves; neither require we of any of ours, in the] confession of their faith, that they either renounce, or, in one word, contest with the Church of England, whatsoever the world clamours of us this way. Our faith is founded upon the writings of the prophets and apostles, in which no

Hosted by Google

mention of the Church of England is made. We deem it our duty what is found in them to "believe, with the heart to righteousness, and to confess with the tongue to salvation." Rom. x. 10.

Secondly, We accord, as far as the Belgic and other reformed churches, with the Church of England in the Articles of Faith and heads of Christian religion, published in the name of that church, and to be found in the "Harmony of the Confessions of Faith."

Thirdly, If by the church be understood the catholic church, dispersed upon the face of the whole earth, we do willingly acknowledge that a singular part thereof, and the same visible and conspicuous, is to be found in the land, and with it do profess and practise, what in us lays, communion in all things, in themselves lawful and done in right order.

But and if by the word church be understood a spiritual politic body, such as was in her time the Church of Israel; and in hers the Church of Rome, Corinth, the seven Churches of Asia, and others, with them, partaking of the same apostolical constitution, and as unto which do appertain the oracles of God, sacraments, censures, government, and ministry ecclesiastical, with other sacred institutions of Christ; I cannot but confess and profess, though with great grief, that it is to us a matter of scruple, which we cannot overcome, to give that honour unto it which is due from the servants of Christ to the Church of Christ, rightly collected and constituted.

And, that there may be place left in the eyes of the prudent reader for our defence in this case, so far forth as equity and reason will permit, he must once and again be entreated by me, seriously to weigh with himself, and in his heart, this one advertisement following.

That a man may do a thing truly pleasing, and acceptable to God, it sufficeth not, that both the doer in his person be accepted of God, the thing done commanded by God, and that he do it with good and holy affection before God, except withal, and first, he be possessed of that state and condition of life, which may afford him a lawful calling to that work. That a man, though never so good, with never so good a mind, should exercise the office, or

Hosted by Google

do (though the best) works of a magistrate, father of family, husband, steward, citizen, or messenger, except he were first lawfully called, and preferred to the state of a magistrate, master of family, husband, or the like; so far were he from deserving any praise for so doing, as on the contrary he most justly incurred the censure of great rashness, and violation of all order in family and commonwealth; as "taking unto himself that honour, unto which he was not called of God." Heb. v. 4. The same holdeth, and that specially in course of religion, which is the special state of man's life: so as if any either as a pastor dispense the holy things of the ministerial church, without a lawful pastoral calling going before; or participate in the same, out of a just and lawful church-state; neither that dispensation, nor this participation can be warranted, but both the one and other are usurpations, and in which is seen not the use, but abuse of holy things, and confusion of order. And as it behoveth every person first to believe, and know, that he is truly a Christian, and partaker of the grace of Christ, before he can hope to please God in the performance of this or that particular Christian work; so doth it also concern every Christian to provide, that he be first possessed of a just and lawful church order, before he so much as touch with his least finger the holy things of the church thereunto proper and peculiar. Proper, I say, and peculiar, amongst which I do not simply reckon the hearing of the Word, which both lawfully may, and necessarily ought to be done, not only of Christians, though members of no particular church, but even of infidels, profane persons, excommunicates, and any others: as being that in which no communion spiritually passeth, either ecclesiastical or personal, between the teacher and hearer, but according to some union, ecclesiastical or personal, going before: seeing that Christian faith comes by hearing the gospel, by faith, union, and from union, communion.

This thus premised, I will speak a few things of the Church of England; not by way of accusation of it, but for our own purgation in the eyes of the godly and equal reader, of the imputed crime of schism, so far as truth and equity will bear.

And first, seeing that the people of God are materially,

Hosted by Google

as they speak, the church of God, it is required to the constitution of a holy church of God, that the people be holy, or saints, and sanctified in Christ Jesus, Rom. i. 7; 1 Cor. i. 2; 2 Cor. i. 1: truly and internally in regard of God, and their own consciences; externally and in appearance in respect of others, whom it concerns to discern and judge of them, according to the Word of God and rule of charity. And considering that our question is about the church external, and visible, as it is called, we are not so fond, or rather frantic, as to require, in respect of others, other holiness in the members thereof, than that which is visible and external.

Now how marvellous a thing is it, and lamentable withal, that amongst Christians, any should be found so far at odds with Christian holiness, as to think that others than apparently holy at the least, deserved admittance into the fellowship of Christ's church, and therewith of Christ! Do, or can the gracious promises of God made to the church, the heavenly blessings due to the church, the seals of Divine grace given to the church, appertain to others than such? Are others to be admitted into the family of God, the kingdom of Christ, and as it were the suburbs of heaven? The church of God is by him called, and destinated to advance his glory in the holiness of their lives, and conversations; what then have those to do with it, or it with those, who, as Calvin saith, in 1 Cor. v., live not but with God's dishonour? For they, as the same author, on Rom. ii. 24, both truly and holily affirmeth, who are called, and accounted the people of God, to bear as it were in their foreheads, Rev. vii. 3, the name of God, whereupon it cannot but come to pass, that before men, even God himself, after a sort should be stained with their filth. And this I deem the rather to be observed, seeing that there are to be found, and these not a few, who would thrust upon the churches of our thrice holy Lord, a very stage-like holiness: stoutly striving to make it good, that to constitute a true and lawful member of the visible church, no more is required, than that a man with his mouth confess Christ, although in his works he plainly declare himself to be of the synagogue of Satan. But what saith the Holy Spirit of these impure spirits? "They profess

Hosted by Google

they know God," saith the apostle, "but in their works they deny him, being abominable, and rebellious, and to every good work reprobate." Tit. i. 16. Are abominable persons to be brought into the temple of God? rebellious persons into the kingdom of God? such as are reprobate unto every good work into the family of God, which is as it were the storehouse of all good works? "If any one that is called a brother, be a fornicator, or covetous, or idolater, or railer, or drunkard, or extortioner," 1 Cor. v. 11, or any way a wicked one, such a one by the apostle's direction, is to be expelled, and driven out of the church's confines. And seeing that, as one truly saith, "It is a matter of greater contumely to thrust out, than to keep out a guest," with what conscience can such plagues be received into the church, to the purging out whereof the same church, furnished for that end with the power of Christ, stands in conscience bound? or by what authority, I pray, can such persons be compelled into the bosom of the spouse of Christ, as for the expelling of whom far from her fellowship, and in embracing all authority ought to conspire? "He that saith he hath fellowship with God, and walks in darkness, is a liar, and doth not truly." 1 John i. 6. Profession of Christ therefore with the mouth, in those that work the works of darkness, and so by consequence, that by which a man is rather branded for a natural child of the devil, John viii. 44, than marked for a true member of the church. Lastly, David, that holy man of God, and type of Christ, doth holily profess, that "he who works deceit, shall not continue in his house," Psa. ci. 7. And shall the workers of deceit, and of all wickedness, not only be admitted, but even constrained into the house of the living God, which the church is? "O Jehovah, holiness becometh thine house to length of days." Psa. xciii. 5. Which notwithstanding (a sickness desperate of all remedy) that so it stands with the Church of England, no man to whom England is known, can be ignorant: seeing that all the natives there, and subjects of the kingdom, although never such strangers from all show of true piety, and goodness, and fraught never so full with many most heinous impieties and vices (of which rank, whether there be not an infinite, and far the greater number, I would to God it

Hosted by Google

could with any reason be doubted,) are without difference compelled and enforced by most severe laws, civil and ecclesiastical, into the body of that church. And of this confused heap, a few, compared with the rest, godly persons mingled among, is that national church, commonly called the Church of England, collected and framed. And such is the material constitution of that church. But if now you demand of me, how it is formally constituted; and whether upon profession of faith and repentance, in word at least, made by them of years, any combination and consociation of the members into particular congregations, (which consociation doth formally constitute the ministerial church, and members thereof, as both the Scriptures and reason manifest) either is, or hath been made, since the universal and antichristian apostacy and defection in popery? Nothing less; but only by their parish perambulation, as they call it, and standing of the houses in which they dwell. Every subject of the kingdom dwelling in this or that parish, whether in city, or country, whether in his own or other man's house, is thereby, *ipso facto*, made legally a member of the same parish in which that house is situated: and bound, will he, nill he, fit, or unfit, as with iron bonds, and all his with him, to participate in all holy things, and some unholy also, in that same parish church.

If any object, that yet the minister of the parish may suspend from the Supper of the Lord flagitious persons, and so by complaint made to Mr. Chancellor, or Mr. Official, procure their excommunication; to let pass, that this is merely a matter of form for the most part, and a remedy as ill as the disease, I do answer, that even by this is proved undeniably that which I intend: viz. that all these parishioners before mentioned, are not without, but within, and members of the church (and the same as before constituted) whom she judgeth. 1 Cor. v. 12, 13.

There is besides these a third evil in the way, and the same as predominant, and overtopping all other things in that church, as was Saul higher than all the rest of the people: and with whose Rehoboam-like finger we miserable men are pressed and oppressed: and that is, the hierarchical church-government in the hands of the lord

Hosted by Google

bishops and their substitutes: the very same with that of Rome, the pope the head only cut off, upon whose shoulders also many, though not without notable injury, would place the supreme magistrate, and administered by the self-same canon law.

Now this vast and insatiable hierarchical gulf, swallowing up and devouring the whole order, and use of the presbytery, and therewith the people's liberty, and withal, by Mr. Parker's testimony, with whom "a bishop in England is the pastor of the whole diocese, and the priests or ministers, only his delegates and helpers,"* the very office of the pastors themselves, as did the seven lean and evil-favoured kine the seven fat, and the seven wizened ears the seven full that went before them, Gen. xli. 20, 24; and so by consequence, not being of Christ the Lord, but of him rather, who opposeth and advanceth himself against whatsoever is called God, or is worshipped; 2 Thes. ii. 4; so as he sits in the temple of God, as God, (for unto God alone dwelling in his temple it appertains to appoint the offices of the ministers, 1 Chron. xxix. 11—13, 19; and to prescribe the people's bonds) our hands are bound by that supreme, and sole authority of Jesus Christ in his churches, upon which both the order of presbytery, and liberty of people, and office of pastor are founded, and from whom as the one only Lord, 1 Cor. v. 4, all ecclesiastical power floweth, and by whom all ministries, 1 Cor. xii. 5, 28, are instituted, from giving any the least honour or obedience to the same hierarchical exaltation in itself, or its subordinates, which, as philosophy teacheth, are one with it.

Wherein yet I would not so be understood, as if we were at any defiance with the persons of the bishops, much less with the king's civil authority whereof they are possessed, whether in matters civil or ecclesiastical. Of their persons, their own lords shall judge, to whom they stand or fall. Rom. xiv. 4. There have been of that rank, who in our Marian days have preferred the profession of the truth of the gospel before their lives: I hope there are also of their successors, who, if pressed with the same necessity (which God forbid) would give the same testimony, though at the same rate, unto the same truth of God revealed unto them.

* Parkerus, de Eccles. Pol. 3, 35, et Hierarchia, passim.

Hosted by Google

Now as concerning their civil authority; albeit we do not believe, that the same is at all competent to the true ministers of the gospel, especially in that eminency, external glory, and pomp of this world, in which they far exceed many worldly princes, and rather seem to represent the triumphant, than the militant church; yet forsomuch as they both obtain the same, by the gift of the king, and exercise it in his name, we do not unwillingly yield honour and obedience unto it, and to his majesty in it.

But, whereas, it seems unto many, plain and evident, that we may adjoin ourselves to the Church of England without any subjection, or relation unto the spiritual government, and governors thereof; that is altogether beyond our capacities: neither can we comprehend it, how it may be that he who subjects and joins himself to any public and politic body, or community, whether spiritual or civil, becomes not in so doing, *ipso facto*, subject to the public government, and governors thereof, and undergoes not a relation and respect actually unto them. They rather are, with all seriousness, to consider, how faithfully and sincerely they quit themselves and their consciences before God and men, who contending, and proving in and by so many words and arguments, that the hierarchical government is papal and antichristian, do nevertheless submit themselves thereunto both in the respect, and relation political formerly mentioned, and also in acts properly ecclesiastical, into which the ecclesiastical government, and spiritual policy of the church doth necessarily diffuse itself. Now I do earnestly entreat thee, whosoever thou art, acquainted with Belgic, or rather Christian liberty, and either free from the mists of prejudice, or if any way prejudiced, "yet not choosing rather to serve a preconceived opinion, than to follow an apparent truth,"* that thou wouldest truly and ingenuously tell, whether if the magistrates here (from which they are far) should by public edict, under severe penalty constrain all and every the native subjects of the country into the bosom of the church, without any difference made, either in respect of faith or manners, according to the place of their habitation; and should set over this church so collected and consti-

* Theodoret. Dial. 1.

Hosted by Google

tuted, an hierarchical bishop provincial or diocesan, in whose hands alone, with his officials, chancellors, commissaries, archdeacons, and other court-keepers, canonical authority should be placed, to constitute and depose ministers, excommunicate and absolve both ministers and people, yea, whole churches (yea, with the living, the dead that they may obtain Christian burial): whether now in this confused heap, and under this spiritual lordship, thou wouldst endure to remain either pastor or member. I suppose not. You, brethren, have not so learned Christ; whom you acknowledge both for the author of your faith, and instituter of your order ecclesiastical. Col. ii. 5. Neither yet we, having learned otherwise by the grace of God. Christ the king doth gather and form unto himself another kind of kingdom amongst men, and the same to be administered by other officers, and according to other laws. And if no place upon the face of the earth should be free for us, poor creatures, refusing upon mere conscience of God, as thou God the judge and searcher of hearts knowest! to commingle, and prostitute ourselves in and unto this confusion and domination hierarchical, we have most assured hope, that heaven itself is open for us by Christ, who is the way, and whom in this duty also we do serve, in which we shall, at the length, be fully free from this, and all other incumbrances.

Our adversaries bear in hand not only others, but even us ourselves also, that we do for certain trifling matters, and as they speak, circumstantial corruptions, sequester ourselves from the Church of England. And as nurses use to lisp with children, so they, that they might descend to our capacities, do oft and much instruct us, that unworthy members must be born in the church, especially of private persons; that some corruptions at least in the discipline and external rites, are to be tolerated; that there may be the temple of God, though profaned; the holy city though without a wall; the field of the Lord, though the enemy sow tares amongst the wheat; also a heap of wheat, though much chaff commingled therewithal. And that we, dul-bayards * as we are, may at the length conceive

* Literally, dull or stupid horses; but used in reference to persons dull of comprehension.

Hosted by Google

those things, they very seriously inculcate and whet upon us in these and the like considerations: as that the Israelitish church in its time was stained with almost all enormities, both for manners and faith: that into the same all Israelites and Jews whatsoever without difference, were violently compelled by King Josiah and others; as also, that in the parable, all were compelled to come to the marriage, good and bad, that the house might be filled. Lastly, that in the apostolic churches themselves, there were not wanting some who practised, and others who taught vile, and evil things: that in one place the discipline was neglected, in another the very doctrine of faith corrupted, and many the like matters, which it were too long to repeat.

Surely, foolish were we if we knew not these things, impudent, if we denied them to be true for the most part; and lastly, unequal, if we acknowledged not, that many the same, or like blemishes after a sort, will, and do creep into the churches of our days: which yet to disclaim as unlawful for the same, stood neither with wisdom, nor charity. But the prudent reader may plainly observe by the premises, that they are other matters, and of greater weight, for the most part, wherewith we, and our consciences are pressed.

We do not judge it an evil intolerable, though greatly to be bewailed, that evil men should be suffered in the church; but that all of most vile, and desperate condition, that such, and so great a kingdom affords, should thereinto, will they, nill they, be compelled: nor that the discipline, as they call it, or ecclesiastical government instituted by Christ, is neglected or violated, but that another plain contrary unto it is set up by law, and fully and publicly everywhere exercised. Neither lies our exception against any personal, or accidentary profanation of the temple, but against the faulty frame of it, in respect of the causes constitutive, matter and form. Neither strive we about the walls of the city, but about the true and lawful citizens, the policy and government of the city of God, and essential administration of the same.

But to give more full satisfaction to the indifferent reader, it seems worth the labour to descend particularly

Hosted by Google

to a few, and the same the chiefest objections made on the contrary behalf. And of them, that which may and ought to be said touching the church of Israel, and its condition compared with the Christian churches seems to deserve the first place. And touching it; first, the constitution of the church of Israel is not to be considered in that whole, much less apostatical nation, but in holy Abraham, from whom it came, and in whom it was holy, as the lump in the first fruits, and the branches in the holy root, Rom. xi. 16: and that by virtue of the gracious covenant, "I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed," Gen. xvii. 7, first contracted with Abraham himself, and after renewed with his seed, whole Israel. But now to affirm any such thing of the whole English nation were foolish; to prove it impossible.

2. God doth not now-a-days select and sever from others as his peculiar, any whole nation or people, as sometimes he did the people of Israel, both ecclesiastically and civilly, Exod. xix. 6; Lev. xx. 25: "but in every nation, they who fear God, and work righteousness are accepted of him." Acts x. 35. These, in what nation soever combining together in holy covenant, and worshipping God after the prescript of his Holy Word are that holy nation, the commonwealth of Israel, the Israel of God, the temple and tabernacle of the living God, in which he hath promised to dwell: these he would have scattered in all places of the world, and to hold intercourse with the men of the world in the common affairs of this life, 1 Cor. v. 10, for their gaining if it may be unto Christ: "God adding daily unto the church such as should be saved." Acts ii. 42. Whereas on the contrary, unto the Church of England, whereof all natural English are together, and at once made members, it can hardly be, if at all, that any at any time should be added.

3. The very land of Canaan was legally holy, and the land of the Lord's inheritance, and whose fruit was to be circumcised, and her sabbaths kept, by the Lord's appointment, Amos vii. 17; Josh. xxii. 22; Lev. xix. 23, 25: and in which alone by Divine right tithes were to be paid. Gen. xiv. 20; xxviii. 22; Lev. xxvii. 30. And as holy things are not to be mingled with, or prostituted unto profane, so

Hosted by Google

neither was any place in this land to be permitted unto profane persons to dwell in. The seven profane nations, which formerly had inhabited it, were altogether to be destroyed by the Israelites being to possess it for their inheritance, neither was mercy to be showed them. After, if any, whether born in the land, or strangers, did aught with an high hand, he was to be cut off from among his people. Deut. vii. 1, 2; Numb. xv. 13. Herewith accords that of David the king, "I will betime destroy all the wicked of the land." Psa. ci. 8. Lastly, He that did not seek the Lord God of Israel with all his heart, was to be put to death, whether small or great, whether man or woman. 2 Chron. xv. 12, 13. Far be it from godly princes, and other potentates in the world, to think, that it behoveth them in this rigorous manner to deal with their subjects: although there want not, who partly from a preposterous, and Judaizing zeal, and partly to serve their own ambition, cease not to inculcate unto the kings of the earth, above that is meet, the examples of the kings of Judah.

4. It is not true that the kings of Judah or Israel did constrain any into the church by force, or compel them to undergo the condition of members, but only being members, to do their duty. All the Israelites and posterity of Jacob, had their part in the Lord's covenant: unto which also they were bound to stand under peril of cutting off from the Lord's people, both spiritually and bodily, according to the dispensation of the old testament in the land of Canaan. But of this our question is not for the present: That neither is to be considered, whether king David, Solomon, Jehoshaphat and others did force circumcision, and other Mosaical institutions upon the Edomites, Ammonites, and others by them subdued, and held in civil subjection; or whether they compelled them by co-active laws, would they, nould they, fit or unfit into the church of God. That this was so, cannot be affirmed with modesty: which yet except it so were, hath nothing in it, which either can hurt our cause, or help our adversaries.

Lastly, He who well weigheth with himself what legal and typical holiness was in use of old in Israel, shadowing out the true and spiritual holiness; and withal by how much, both the more clear revelation of heavenly things,

Hosted by Google

and more plenteous grace of the Spirit is afforded to the churches since Christ, than was formerly to Israel, he shall see many things making for the tolerating of much in Israel; which in us is plainly intolerable: and that God will not use that patience and long-suffering towards any church now, Rev. ii. 5; iii. 16, nor permit, or wink at those things in it, which for the hardness of their hearts, he bore in that ancient people.*

The parable of the tares, Matt. xiii., followeth; with which as with some thunderbolt, men both learned and unlearned think us beaten all to fritters.

But first, these words, "Let both grow together till the harvest," ver. 30, (from which alone they do dispute) Christ the Lord doth not expound nor meddle with, in the opening of the parable: from them therefore nothing firm can be concluded. 2. Christ himself interprets the field, not the church, but the world, ver. 38, as also the harvest not the end of the church, but of the world, ver. 39. And if by the world, you understand the church, you must needs say, that Christ in the expounding of one parable, used another. 3. Both the text itself, ver. 28—31, and reason of the thing do plainly teach that he doth not speak at all of excommunication, which serves for the bettering of the tares, but of their final rooting up to perdition. Lastly, Admit Christ spake of men apparently wicked in the church, either not to be excommunicated in certain cases, which with Gellius Snecanus† I confidently deny, or not excommunicated as they ought to be, and therefore to be born of private members; the former of which is too ordinary, especially in churches enjoying peace and prosperity: the latter of which, the church not being desperately bent on evil, I easily assent to, yet doth this place afford no medicine for our grief; which ariseth not from any corrupt or negligent administration of the church's discipline, through the carelessness or want of wisdom, it may be too much wisdom such as it is, of the administrators thereof, which are personal things; but from the very constitution of the church itself, and subject of ecclesiastical both government and power. Yea, I add unto all these

* Pareus in 1 Cor. vii. 11.

† Ch. Discip. 2 part, Meth. 2, pp. 24, 27, 28.

Hosted by Google

things, that we for our parts are willing in the business, and controversy in hand to appeal unto the tribunal of this very parable, and that expounded by our adversaries themselves, and do willingly condescend, that by it alone judgment be given on this matter.

Our Saviour Christ doth plainly teach, that this field was sown with good seed alone; and that after, "whilst men slept, the enemy, the devil, came and sowed tares amongst the wheat." But on the contrary, in the sowing the English field, whether we respect the national or parochial churches, together with the wheat, the tares, and that exceeding the other infinitely, were at first, and yet are sown, and that of purpose and under most severe penalties. And hence is the first and principal prejudice to our English harvest, and from which I conceive all the rest to come. For unto this church, thus clapped and clouted together of all persons, of all sorts, and spirits without difference, no man equally and prudently weighing things, can deny, but that the pompous and imperious hierarchical government, together with all its accessories, doth right well accord.

To the things objected, from the parable of the marriage, Luke xiv. and Matt. xxii., I only answer, that those servants were the prophets and apostles; the son, Christ himself; the compulsion to be made, no otherwise than by the preaching of the Word: "by which," as Calvin hath it, on Matt. xxii. 9, "God doth importunately solicit our slothfulness, not only pricking us with exhortations, but compelling us with threatenings to come unto him:" which Word of God, as it is by some wholly contemned, so doth it extort from others only an external and hypocritical obedience; but by many is received, through the blessing of God, with all holy and devout affection.

Now unto these parables of Christ many are wont, and that very busily, to annex one of their own. A heap, say they, of wheat, although it have much chaff mixed with it, and the same more in quantity than the wheat is, remains notwithstanding truly, and is rightly termed, a heap of wheat; according to the philosophers' rule,—The denomination is not of the greater but better part.

I answer, first, that this axiom is not simply true: for

Hosted by Google

if in the church, or any other convention popular, or in which things pass by voices, the greater part happen to exceed the better, the denomination of that passage or decree, and so the whole process of the matter, is according to the greater, though the worser part.

Second. The chaff in that wheat is either of the same wheat or of other, and brought from elsewhere; if of that same, then it makes nothing to the present purpose, since wicked men appertain not to the persons of the godly, nor are their chaff; if of other, and from elsewhere, it may easily be added in that quantity and proportion, as that neither it may deserve the name of a heap of wheat, but of chaff; nor he that sells it for wheat, of an honest merchant, but of a deceitful impostor.

Third. The things objected for the apostolical churches, are altogether personal and accidental; from which that the churches gathered of men, and by men governed, should be exempted, is rather to be desired than hoped for. But for us, the things which most afflict us in the Church of England, and press us in the respect fore-mentioned to a secession from the same, do concern the very material and formal constitution of the ministerial church, together with the essential administration of the church policy. And how different these things are, who seeth not?

Lastly, It is objected, that in the Church of England lively faith, and true piety, are both begotten and nourished, in the hearts of many, by the preaching of the gospel there. God forbid! that we should not acknowledge that, and withal that infinite thanks for the same are due to God's great power and goodness, both in respect of ourselves and others; who, notwithstanding the great confusion both of persons and things, there to be found, vouchsafeth to his elect so plentiful grace; covering under the veil of his superabundant goodness and mercy, by their sincere faith in Christ Jesus, their sins and aberrations, whether of ignorance or infirmity. What, then, must be done? Should we continue in sin, that grace might abound? or, shall we against knowledge go on to walk inordinately, because in our ignorance God hath vouchsafed us of his grace in that disordered state of things? without the ministerial church, of which we speak,

Hosted by Google

the preaching of the gospel both may, and useth to be had, and by it faith to be ingenerated, except Christian churches be to be gathered of infidels and unbelievers. Besides, what Minos, or Rhadamant will deny, that even in the bosom of the Romish church some faithful persons may be found? how much more in that of England, in which the main truths of the gospel, the most and greatest errors of popery being banished, are taught by so many godly and learned men, with such zeal and earnestness? Now what of these things? Is it therefore lawful for a Christian, either to content himself with himself, without joining to any Christian congregation; or to continue still in the bosom of the Church of Rome, as a member under the Pope, the head? I therefore conclude out of Mr. Brightman, on Rev. ii. 20, whose words I had rather use than mine own, speaking of the government and ministry of the Church of England, "The fruit," to wit, of the word preached, "doth no more exempt from blame our corruptions, than a true child doth adultery."

And here thou hast, Christian reader, the whole order of our conversation in the work of Christian religion, set down both as briefly and plainly as I could. If in any thing we err, advertise us brotherly, with desire of our information, and not, as our countrymen's manner for the most part is, with a mind of reproaching us, or gratifying of others: and whom thou findest in error, thou shalt not leave in obstinacy, nor as having a mind prone to schism. Err we may, alas! too easily: but heretics, by the grace of God, we will not be. But and if the things which we do, seem right in thine eyes, as to us certainly they do, I do earnestly, and by the Lord Jesus admonish and exhort thy godly mind, that thou wilt neither withhold thy due obedience from his truth, nor just succour from thy distressed brethren. Neither do thou endure, that either the smallness of the number, or meanness of the condition of those that profess it, should prejudice with thee the profession of the truth: but have in mind that of Tertullian,* "Do we measure men's faith by their persons, or their persons by their faith?" as also that of Austin,† "Let

* Tertull. de Præscr. adv. Heret. cap. 3.

† Austin contrà Maxim. 3, 14.

Hosted by Google

matter weigh with matter, and cause with cause, and reason with reason:" but especially that of the apostle, "My brethren, have not the faith of our glorious Lord Jesus Christ in respect of persons." James ii. 1. But now, if it so come to pass, which God forbid, that the most being either forestalled by prejudice, or by prosperity made secure, there be few found, especially men of learning, who will so far vouchsafe to stoop, as to look upon so despised creatures, and their cause; this alone remaineth, that we turn our faces and mouths unto thee O most powerful Lord, and gracious Father, humbly imploring help from God towards those who are by men left desolate. There is with thee no respect of persons, neither are men less regarders of thee if regarders of thee for the world's disregarding them. They who truly fear thee, and work righteousness, although constrained to live by leave in a foreign land, exiled from country, spoiled of goods, destitute of friends, few in number, and mean in condition, are for all that unto thee (O gracious God) nothing the less acceptable. Thou numberest all their wanderings, and puttest their tears into thy bottles. Are they not written in thy book? Towards thee, O Lord, are our eyes; confirm our hearts, and bend thine ear, and suffer not our feet to slip, or our face to be ashamed, O thou both just and merciful God. To him through Christ be praise, for ever, in the church of saints; and to thee, loving and Christian reader, grace, peace, and eternal happiness. Amen.

FINIS.

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google

TWO LETTERS

ON

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP:

ONE BY

REV. WILLIAM AMES, D.D.,

THE OTHER BY

REV. JOHN ROBINSON.

1611.

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google

NOTICE RESPECTING

THE TWO LETTERS.

THE Preface to the Treatise on "Religious Communion," following these Letters, refers to a scurrilous book published in 1612, by persons who had formerly been in connexion with the Separatists at Amsterdam, but who had either been excommunicated, or had abandoned their former connexions, and had returned to the English Church. The title of their joint production is, "The Prophane Schism of the Brownists, or Separatists, with the impiety, dissensions, lewd and abominable vices of that impure sect; discovered by Christopher Lawne, Clement Saunders, and Robert Bulward, lately returned into the bosom of the Church of England from the company of Mr. Johnson. 1612."

The title indicates the character of the book, and awakens suspicions as to the credibility of the authors. Mr. Robinson's allusions to the parties, as well as Mr. Clyfton's reply in his work entitled, "An Advertisement concerning a book, lately published by Christopher Lawne and others, against the exiled Church at Amsterdam, by Richard Clyfton, Teacher of the same Church, 1612," shows that they were by no means trustworthy. Their extreme eagerness to destroy the reputation of their former friends defeats its object, and betrays only the malignity of their spirit.

While, however, the testimony of Lawne is, in general, more than suspicious, there can be little doubt respecting the authenticity of the following letters, which, it would appear, had been surreptitiously printed, or clandestinely obtained, and afterwards copied and circulated. Mr. Robinson states in the Preface, p. 96, that these Letters, with a third, which Dr. Ames published as a rejoinder, were printed "without his consent, privity, or suspicion of such dealing." He regarded them as private, and intended only for his correspondent and himself.

The "learned Amesius" was a distinguished Puritan in England; but in consequence of the persecuting proceed-

Hosted by Google

ings of Archbishop Bancroft, he fled to Holland, in 1610, and became minister of the English Church at the Hague. On Abbott's succeeding to the Archiepiscopal See, he wrote to the English Ambassador, in 1612, to get Ames removed from his charge. This being effected, the same influence was exerted to prevent his appointment as Divinity Professor at the University of Leyden. The States of Friesland, however, appointed him to the Theological Chair at the University of Franeker, where he continued, discharging his professional duties with distinguished and growing success, for nearly twelve years. His health failing, he retired to Rotterdam, and became co-pastor with the Rev. Hugh Peters, over the Independent Church in that town. He did not long survive the change, and was buried November 14th, 1633.*

It is not stated in what year the "Letters" were written; but, as they were extant when Lawne published his "Profane Schism," in 1612, they were doubtless written in 1611, while Dr. Ames was Minister of the English Church at the Hague, which office he was compelled to resign in 1612. The correspondence, therefore, took place three years before Robinson published his Treatise on "Communion."

The insertion of the Letters in this part of the volume has been deemed desirable, as they form an important introduction to the "Religious Communion;" and without the study of which, certain parts both of the preface and the first part of that work cannot be well understood.

What influence the correspondence with Dr. Ames had on Mr. Robinson's mind does not appear; but it is evident, on comparing the letters and the work on "Communion," that a considerable modification had taken place in his views on the subject. Dr. Ames in his letters strenuously contends against Mr. Robinson's supposed uncharitableness in not holding "private communion" with "members of the true visible church," who belonged to the "Assemblies," or the English Church—while the parties to whom Mr. Robinson refers in the treatise, objected to his supposed latitudinarianism in holding private and occasional fellow-

* Vide Brooks' Lives of the Puritans, vol. ii. pp. 405—408; Hanbury's Historical Memorials, vol. i. p. 257.

Hosted by Google

ship with pious persons belonging a national ecclesiastical establishment.

In the earlier period of his separation Mr. Robinson was more "rigid" in his notions respecting church-fellowship and discipline; but his charity expanded as his years increased, and he delighted to recognise as brethren, all who followed Christ sincerely and devoutly, though they might not feel it to be their duty to leave their church connexions and unite themselves with the Separatists.

LETTERS.

"LETTERS that passed betwixt M. Ames and M. Robinson touching the bitterness of the Separation." Copied from Lawne's "Profane Schism," chap. viii. pp. 47—51.

"One point of schism which Mr. Gilgate objected unto Mr. Ainsworth was, for their separation in private from those particular persons, which might be discerned to be true visible Christians even by their own confession. This point, because it is further discussed in divers arguments and writings betwixt Master Ames and Master Robinson, we have thought it meet to publish them as they came unto our hands, because they serve much for the declaration and manifestation of their schism herein."

LETTER OF REV. WM. AMES TO MR. ROBINSON.

G. M. and P. (*Grace, Mercy, and Peace.*)

SIR,—I do not desire to multiply many letters, nor many words in this one letter. I will pass by, therefore, your censure. Your manner of Separation also I omit, whether it be like or dislike to that of the first reformed churches, for you have irons enough in the fire about that question. Neither will I trouble you about my associates here, whom you deem evil of, though they be unknown unto you: only that one point which containeth indeed the very bitterness of Separation, I would desire you again to consider of, as you do me: viz. "Whether there be not a visible communion even out of a visible church." These reasons seem to evince it.

1. Whomsoever I can rightly discern to have com-

Hosted by Google

munion with Jesus Christ, with him may I have visible communion: the reason is, because that from visible descrying of that inward communion, doth necessarily follow external communion. Neither can other sufficient reason be given, why we should communicate with visible churches, but only because we visibly discern that they have communion with Christ: Now "*quatenus ipsum et de omni convertuntur.*" But we may discern (even by your confession) of some, out of a visible church that they have communion with Christ: *Ergo*,

2. That which is lawful for them to do which are no members of a visible church, that is lawful for others to join with them in: for that which is no sin in the principal is none in the accessory, "*ceteris paribus.*" And it cannot be simply unfawful to join in any action that is lawful, "*quatenus talis;*" but it is lawful for Christians converted, even before they join in any church (perhaps wanting knowledge of the true constitution, perhaps opportunity) to worship God. Therefore,

3. It is necessary, that before the covenant-making (which you hold to be the form of a church) they that are to make it, should join together in prayer for direction, assistance, and blessing, yet they are not a church until after: therefore, it is not only lawful, but necessary also that there be a communion out of a visible church. You may easily conceive the form and force of this argument. If you answer that they are a church in desire, that is to forsake your position: for desire to be, doth imply that as yet they are not: "*A velle ad esse non sequitur ratio.*" I will not be further tedious unto you. Fare you well.

Your loving frend,

WILLIAM AMES.

Feb. 25.

LETTER OF MR. ROBINSON TO MR. AMES.

Mercy and peace be with you. Amen.

SIR,—Because I do understand by many, that you marvel I answer not your reasons, having had your writing so long in my hands, I thought good to return you a brief answer. Your reasons to prove visible communion out of

Hosted by Google

a visible church follow; though that be not the question between you and me, but whether "we which are or deem ourselves to be of a visible church, may lawfully communicate with such as be of no church"?

I deny that external communion doth necessarily flow from the discerning of inward communion with Christ, which is your first reason: for then I have external communion with the angels and faithful departed this life. External communion is a matter of external relation and order, under which men out of the church are not. The order set by Christ and his apostles is, that such as receive the Word and are to be saved, Acts ii. 41—47, join themselves forthwith unto the church, and a large remnant it is of the confusions which Antichrist hath brought into the world, that men fearing God should remain out of the true church.

For the further clearing of these things,

If an innocent person (in mine absence) be excommunicated from the church, upon the testimony of two or three, yet will I for order's sake (and so am bound) forbear communion with him till I have manifested his innocency to the church. On the other side, though I know some great wickedness by a brother, which he denies, and I cannot prove, I must still for order's sake keep communion with him in the church, till God discover him. It is evident, therefore, that, in cases, I am both to forbear communion with a godly man, till we be orderly joined together; and to keep communion with a wicked man till we be orderly disjoined.

Add unto these things, that upon this ground, I may also lawfully admit one out of the church, to the Lord's Supper, to the choice of officers, censuring of offenders, and all other exercise of external communion; if by the judgment of charity, I deem him holy in his person. And how can I deny him one part of external communion, to whom I afford another, but I make a schism in the communion of saints? and this also may serve for answer to the latter part of your proof touching visible churches: for they have not only internal communion with Christ, but external also in the order which he hath set. For which we stand and for the want of which alone, we with-

Hosted by Google

draw ourselves, as we do in this case, not daring to break Christ's order for men's disorder.

The sum of the second argument, is, that because it is lawful for some such as are not yet members of a true church to pray, therefore, others of a church may join with them in prayer.

I do first answer, that men in a church are bound to and from many things, wherein men not in the church may use more liberty, and upon the same ground you might soundly argue thus: Because two or three persons excommunicated upon false testimony, may pray together, and, therefore, the brethren of the church may forthwith pray with them; though prayer be in itself a lawful thing, and they holy in their persons that perform it, yet it is unlawfully performed out of the church, in which men ought to be and therein to use it. So that although there be neither "*Vitium personæ nec vitium rei*," yet there is "*Vitium ordinis, et relationis:*" and this external religious order and relation is the church order; and religious communion, a work, doth presuppose religious union of persons.

Touching men joining in prayer, before they enter covenant, and so before they be in a church, whence you do take your third argument: I do answer, first, for that there is not the like reason of them and us, which are, or take ourselves to be in the order of an established church: they then break no order, though we should. Secondly, Such persons are joined in will and purpose, at the least, the which is accepted as the deed; 2 Cor. viii. 12; though the outward ceremony be not as yet performed. So is Abraham said to have offered up Isaac, Heb. xi. 17; and Priscilla and Aquila to have laid down their own necks for Paul's life; Rom. xv. 3, 4; which notwithstanding, they did only in will and purpose. Your axiom, "*A velle ad esse non sequitur ratio*" hath his use especially "*in rebus naturalibus.*" But the urging of it thus absolutely in matters of religion, tends to deprive the church of her greatest spiritual comfort.

Lastly, Consider the covenant "*in concreto*" and prayer is a part thereof. And when men are so met, with a purpose to unite, and do begin prayer for the sanctification of

Hosted by Google

it; they are in the door coming into the house, and not without. The Jews were not to have religious communion with persons uncircumcised: and yet, I doubt not, but when a godly proselyte was to be circumcised, they might lawfully join with him for the sanctification of the ordinance.

I cease further to trouble you, and do heartily salute you in the Lord God, wishing you from him all prosperity, and in him resting.

Leyden, this second of the week,

Your loving friend,

JOH. ROBINSON.

Dr. Ames published a rejoinder to this letter, but Mr. Robinson did not reply again, judging his friend's arguments inconclusive and not requiring refutation.

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google

OF

RELIGIOUS COMMUNION,

PRIVATE AND PUBLIC.

WITH THE SILENCING OF THE CLAMOURS RAISED BY MR. THOMAS HELWISSE AGAINST OUR RETAINING THE BAPTISM RECEIVED IN ENGLAND AND ADMINISTERING OF BAPTISM UNTO INFANTS.

AS ALSO,

A SURVEY OF THE CONFESSION OF FAITH, PUBLISHED IN CERTAIN CONCLUSIONS, BY THE REMAINDERS OF MR. SMYTH'S COMPANY.

BY JOHN ROBINSON.

"The simple believeth every word: but the prudent looketh well to his going.
PROV. xiv. 15.

PRINTED ANNO 1614.

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google

EDITORIAL NOTICE.

THE title and preface of the following Work sufficiently explain its object.

It was doubtless written at Leyden, and probably printed in that city. The first part, "On Communion," shows the progress of Mr. Robinson's mind towards more enlarged and liberal views on Christian fellowship, than those he entertained when the correspondence took place between Mr. Ames and himself, three years previously; and furnishes an illustration of his remark respecting himself, at the close of the Preface, that he was one of those who desired "to learn further or better what the good will of God is."

The second and third parts are more controversial in their character, and may be regarded as amplifications and confirmations of the arguments on similar topics, in the "Defence of the Doctrine propounded at the Synod of Dort," contained in vol. i., pp. 260—471.

Hosted by Google

CONTENTS.

Editorial Notice.

Preface.

Chap.

I. Private Communion.

II. Public Communion.

III. Of Flight in Persecution.

IV. The outward Baptism received in England is lawfully retained.

V. Of the Baptism of Infants.

VI. A Survey of the Confession of Faith, published in certain Conclusions by the Remainder of Mr. Smyth's Company after his Death.

Sect.

1. On Knowledge of God.
2. God's Decrees about Sin.
3. Adam's Fall and Sin.
4. Original Sin.
5. God's Love and Man's Recovery.
6. Universal Redemption.
7. Apostacy from Grace.
8. Christ's Sacrifice.
9. Regeneration.
10. Perfection.
11. The Visible Church.
12. Magistracy and Oaths.

Hosted by Google

THE PREFACE.

THERE passed out, some while since, a defamatory libel, under the names of Charles Lawne and three other, his brethren in evil;* but certainly penned by some other persons, whose greater knowledge did arm their cruel hatred the more to hurt: making them fathers of that "generation whose teeth are as swords, and their jaw teeth as knives, to devour the afflicted from off the earth, and the poor from among men." Prov. xxx. 14. Against whom and whose friends, durst I use the same liberty, in publishing to the world their personal corruptions which I know, and could soon learn by the testimony of honester men than these informers, they who have written of others what hath pleased them, should read that which would not please them, of their own, if not of themselves. But God forbid! My desire is rather to pacify than to alienate affections; remembering Christ's instruction unto his disciples, to "bless those that curse them," "to do good to those that harm them," and "to pray for those that persecute them." Matt. v. 44. Besides, in following their course, I should, for the faults of a few corrupter persons, wrong the credit of many honest and innocent men; for whose sakes, I would rather cover the others' failings, than for them blemish the credit of the rest. But herein special respect is to be had to the common truths of the Lord Jesus, by them and us acknowledged; upon the honour whereof, had they been but half so bent as upon our disgrace, they would not thus have gratified the common adversaries thereof, even theirs and ours, and with them the atheists and epicures in the land, by whom their book is most affected; blessing themselves in their pro-

* Vide title of Lawne's book, page 83, *supra*.

Hosted by Google

fessed contempt of God, and of all religion, by the sayings of those, whether truly or falsely suggested they regard not, who profess his more special fear and service; and concluding that all others are as ill as themselves, though more covertly. It is the spider's disposition, so she may entangle the silly flies in her web, to weave out her own bowels.

This libel it hath pleased divers persons of note for learning and zeal to countenance, with their writings of divers kinds. Amongst the rest, Mr. W. Ames, fearing belike lest either it should want credit, or I discredit, by the acccusations in it against the persons of other men in other churches, (which, though they were all true, as I know some of them to be wholly false, and others impudently published by such as were themselves chief agents in them, yet did no more concern me and the church with me, than did the abuses in the church of Corinth, the church at Rome; or those in some of the seven churches in Asia, the rest which were free from them,) hath published to the world, in the body of that book, without my consent, privity, or least suspicion of such dealing, certain private letters,* passing between him and me, about private communion betwixt the members of the true visible church, and others; though he take advantage and occasion, by certain general words of mine, to alter the state of the question. The occasion of which passages, if I should also publish, I am sure he would not like it, nor have cause.

Now, as I neither am, nor would be thought, insensible of this unchristian enmity, and violent opposition by them against us, in the practice of those things which themselves, as their writings testify,† do so far approve; so I think a preface very convenient for my present purpose, to

* Vide Letters between Mr. Ames and Mr. Robinson, pp. 85—89, *supra*.

† Vide Admonition to the Parliament. M. Ch. Sermon upon Rom. xii., (supposed to refer to the Rev. Lawrence Chadderton, D.D., First Master of Emanuel College, Cambridge.) M. Cart. English Puritanism, &c. (Rev. Thos. Cartwright, B.D.) the distinguished Puritan and Presbyterian, but opponent of the Brownists and Separatists.

Hosted by Google

communicate with others, such grounds as upon which they seem to raise the same.

And, first, all oppositions in religion are carried usually with violence, as wherein men have special persuasion they please God in that, their special work of conscience and zeal for him and his truth. And, as men are in danger to mistake error for truth, so to prosecute the same with wrath and indignation, instead of the true zeal of God. And I do much intreat and warn those men, in the fear of the Lord, to beware that instead of zeal against our supposed errors, they nourish not in their hearts wrath and hatred against our persons; which is a great iniquity where it is found, and most contrary unto love, and so unto God, who is love, 1 John iv. 16, and the breaking of the whole law, which love fulfilleth. Gal. v. 14.

But, besides this general, they take more special occasion of offence at us, and our separation, by which we carry our differences; as wherein we do not only in word, but even really and indeed reprove their state and standing, as unlawful; and such, as we rather choose all calamities by loss of country, friends, riches, credit, liberty, yea and life itself, than by continuance therein to withhold the truth of God in unrighteousness, and uphold the chair of apostacy, and so to pull down wrath from heaven upon our heads. Which our sequestration is yet the more offensive unto them, by how much the nearer we were, and yet are in many things, united: the contentions of brethren being as the bars of a castle, Prov. xviii. 19; as also for that their party, for the reformation of their pretended national Judah, is thereby weakened. And as any, according to the proverb, may easily find a staff to beat a dog withal, so do men easily take occasion to lay load upon us, who are, for our fewness in number and meanness of condition, so contemptible in their eyes; and against whom they have all advantages for treading upon us (save the truth) which they can desire. But the Lord Jesus, in teaching that "the way to life is narrow, which few find," and that "to the poor the gospel is preached," and thereupon that "he is blessed who is not offended at him," doth plainly forewarn all his servants of this offence. Matt. vii. 14; xi. 5, 6. Others there are, also, who, whatsoever they boast of the Scrip-

Hosted by Google

tures, have for the most part a traditional faith and religion; and, as Naaman, the Syrian, would not believe that there could be any better waters than the rivers of Damascus, 2 Kings v. 12, so neither do they think it possible that there should be any purer manner of worshiping God, than that to which they have been always used; unto which they are so superstitiously addicted, as that they are ready to think it an heretical way for any man to step out of the beaten trod of their teachers' traditionary religion.

There are also besides all these, that have their politic ends, and respects, for which they affect opposition against us. Some, of the prelates' faction, to gratify their lords and masters, at whose devotion they stand, and against whom we principally witness: others, though they like not the bishops, yet think it a point of their wisdom to take and hold up professed opposition against us, that under it as a buckler they may cover their own irregularity, and make their jealous masters believe, that they cannot but be indifferently well affected towards them, being so vehemently bent against us. Yea, others perceiving that their own grounds do in the judgment of others, wise and impartial, directly lead to the way, in which we walk, and yet seeing it not to be for their purposes to have the world so to esteem of them, do undoubtedly strain and wring the neck of their consciences, and courses, to look the contrary way, that they may not be thought to have their faces towards us.

Lastly, there are, who fearing belike to be overcome of the truth we profess, if with quiet and calm thoughts they come to consider of it, and not having hearts to embrace it, do set themselves against it tumultuously; like those cowards, who fearing the force of their adversaries, do think by debasing and reviling of them, to encourage their own faint and feeble hearts against them.

But good had it been for the truth, if at it, offences had only been taken by the adversaries thereof, and not also given by them, who have professed it: and those both so public, as they cannot be concealed, and so great, as they can receive no sufficient excuse. Yet are there notwithstanding divers things, and those such as will seem, I

Hosted by Google

doubt not, of weight, to the wise in heart, which both justly may, and necessarily must be observed about those matters: whether offensive contentions, or other personal evils, laid to our charge, and published to the world against us.

First then, and in the general; the publishers of those accusations cannot be unsuspected of any reasonable man: being such generally, as are both enemies to our profession, and have either for their unfaithful apostacy, or other scandalous sins, or both, been cast out of the church and excommunicated.* Now as for the former, it is truly and commonly said, that no person running away from his master, will easily speak well of him: so doth experience confirm it, for the latter, that scarce any condemned in any court, how justly soever, but will complain either of the malice of the evidence, or ignorance of the jury, or injustice of the judge. Condemned persons must repair their own, by ruinating the credits of their judges.

More especially: and first, of the contentions which have fallen out amongst the professors of this way. As Paul complaineth, that sin taking occasion by the law, wrought in him all manner of concupiscence, Rom. vii. 8: so indeed hath the malice of Satan, and man's corruption taken occasion to work much evil of this kind, by sundry good things specially found in the professors of this truth; as 1, by their knowledge, 2, zeal, and 3, liberty of the gospel. Knowledge, saith the apostle, puffeth up, 1 Cor. xiii. 1; i. 5, 7, 11; iii. 3: and hence was it, that the same church to which he so writes, exceeding other churches in knowledge, did also pass them in contentions, and strifes. So the churches this way, which I may truly speak, and without boasting, going before other ordinary assemblies in knowledge, are the more in danger of contentions, without special modesty, and watchfulness. Ignorant persons, and peoples, are for the most part, easily ruled, as being content to trust other men with their faith and religion: neither was there ever so great peace in the Christian world, as it is called, as in the deepest darkness of popery. 2ndly, as the greatest zeal for God is rightly found amongst God's people, so is peace and agreement greatly endangered thereby, if it be not tem-

* Lawne was excommunicated July 23, 1611.

Hosted by Google

pered with much wisdom, moderation, and brotherly forbearance: and that they consider not aright, that both themselves and others are frail men, and compassed about with much ignorance, and infirmity otherwise: who are therefore to study, not only how to have that which they like, but also how to bear that in other men (if not intolerable) which they like not: otherwise, whilst men think by their zeal to warm the house, they will burn it over their own, and other men's heads. 3rdly, and lastly, they only, who enjoy liberty, know how hard a thing it is to use it aright. And when I see them in England wondering at the dissensions in this way, methinks I see two prisoners, being themselves fast chained and manacled together by feet, and hands, wondering to see that other men, at liberty, walk not closer together than they do. Their thraldom makes them unequal censurers of the abuse of our liberty. How many thousands are there, whose very hearts are fretted with the chains of their spiritual bondage! Yea, how many several factions of ministers are there, whose differences, if by servile fear they were not nipped in the bud, would bring forth no small both dissensions and divisions: as at this day woeful experience teacheth in the reformed churches, whose dissensions do infinitely exceed all that ever have been amongst us! As ignorance begot, so tyranny maintained the greatest peace and unity, when popish iniquity most prevailed.

Now for personal offences; as we profess, and avow before all men, that, for ourselves, we neither receive, nor keep amongst us any persons not sanctified in their measure (in our discerning:) so do we not think ourselves any way privileged, either from the common infirmities of God's more worthy servants in all ages, or from the malice of Satan in thrusting upon us false brethren unawares, Jude 4: whose hypocrisy, and profane usurpation of the Lord's covenant, and holy things, unto which they have no right, he often punisheth with scandalous sins, and so leadeth them out amongst the workers of iniquity. Which scandals we could yet cover from the eyes of the world in a great measure, if we durst, as others do, either let sin rest upon our brethren, Lev. xix. 17: or smother in a consistory such offences, as are either public, of their own

Hosted by Google

nature, or so made by the offender's private impenitence, 1 Tim. v. 20: which because we dare not do, nor but rebuke him openly, which so sinneth, and so judge both his sin and person, in which our proceedings and dealings, new offences are also added oftentimes, we do thereby lay open our own shame in the eyes of the world: and so walking in our simplicity, because we dare not be wise against the Lord Jesus Christ, his order and ordinances, we have in so great a measure our faults written in our foreheads, and are a wonder and offence unto others, who are far better acquainted with our failings, than with their own.

But besides, if not above the rest, great offence hath been taken, by many, at our extreme straitness in respect of the order wherein we walk: and more especially for refusing communion in the private and personal exercises of religion with the better sort in the assemblies; as wherein we have not only made a separation from the wicked, and from the godly also in things unlawful, or unlawfully performed, but even in their lawful actions. This Mr. Ames calls the bitterness of separation: and for it, as it seems, thinks it lawful to cast upon me the reproach of the sins of other churches and persons, whether truly, or falsely laid to their charge, he knoweth not; as also to insinuate against me, that I despise the writings of Junius,* and so of other learned men:† as justly as others have laid to his charge the contempt of all ancient writers: wherein if men deal unjustly with him, and his friends, let him see whether God deal not justly, in rewarding him as he hath served others.

For the matter of his letters, if I would strive with him about the arguments, with whom I agree in the question,

* Francis Junius, a learned French Protestant divine, was born at Bourges in 1545. He was successively minister of the Walloon Church at Antwerp, Chaplain to the army of the Prince of Orange, Professor at Heidelberg, and Divinity reader at Leyden, where he died of the plague in 1602, about three months after he had published his "Letters" against the "Confession of Faith, and certain English people living in the Low Countries." He wrote Commentaries on the Scriptures, but is best known by his Latin version of the Bible, jointly with Tremellius.

† Grotius against the English Puritans.

Hosted by Google

I could manifest, I doubt not, how he hath not dealt sufficiently in it. Whether or no there were in the assemblies faithful and godly persons, and the same so appearing unto men, I never called into question, nor could without sinning greatly against mine own conscience:* the thing I feared, was the violation, and breach of order in the communion between the members of the true visible church, and others out of that order, or in the contrary. Mine objection hereabout Mr. A. answereth not, but only makes light account of it, as a strange order, which is broken by saying amen to a godly man's prayer. But all men know, that to set light by an argument is no sufficient answer unto it. And many cases may be put in which order may be sinfully broken in communicating even with a godly man's prayers; either privately, as if he will professedly offer up the prayers of an excommunicate, detected heretic, or other ungodly person: or publicly, if he perform the same without a true, or by a false calling. Here was use of a distinction of religious actions, into personal and church actions:† which if either Mr. A. had observed unto me, or I myself then conceived of, would have cleared the question to my conscience: and with which I did wholly satisfy myself in this matter, when God gave me once to observe it.

My judgment therein, and the reasons of it, I have set down in the first part of the book: unto which I bind no man further to assent, than he sees ground from the Scriptures. In it I oppose no article of our Confession:‡ neither was it the author's meaning, as it seemeth, further to conclude and profess separation than from communion in the public worship, and administrations there:§ neither do I herein oppose any set order of any church this way, to my knowledge. I myself, and the people with me generally, did separate from the formal state of the parish assemblies, in this persuasion, and so practised all the while we abode in England as some there continuing, have done to

* Vide Vol. ii., A Justification, &c.,

† See p. 1 of following Treatise.

‡ "The Confession of Faith," referred to in p. 101, note, published at Amsterdam, 1598; reprinted, 1607.

§ Art. 31.

Hosted by Google

this day: there having been also sundry passages between Mr. Smyth, and me about it; with whom I also refused to join, because I would use my liberty in this point: and for which I was, by some of the people with him, excepted against, when I was chosen into office in this church. Indeed afterwards finding them of other churches, with whom I was most nearly joined, otherwise minded for the most part, I did through my vehement desire of peace, and weakness withal, remit and lose of my former resolution: and did, to speak as the truth is, forget some of my former grounds; and so have passed out upon occasion, some arguments against this practice. Which yet notwithstanding I have, in the same place, so set down, as all may see I was therein far from that certainty of persuasion, which I had and have of the common grounds of our separation: of which I think this no part at all. But had my persuasion in it been fuller than ever it was, I profess myself always one of them, who still desire to learn further, or better, what the good will of God is. And I beseech the Lord from mine heart, that there may be in the men, (towards whom I desire in all things lawful to enlarge myself) the like readiness of mind to forsake every evil way, and faithfully to embrace and walk in the truth they do, or may see, as by the mercy of God, there is in me; which as I trust it shall be mine, so do I wish it may be their comfort also in the day of the Lord Jesus.

JOHN ROBINSON.

Hosted by Google

CHAPTER I.

OF PRIVATE COMMUNION.

THE apostle writing to the church at Colosse with much joy for their stableness in the grace of God received, reduceth the whole matter of that his "rejoicing" to two general heads: "faith," and "order." Col. ii. 5. Of which two, faith, though set after in place, is before, both in nature, time, and dignity: as making men in their persons severally fit for, and capable of that order, wherein they are jointly to be united.

Now from these two spring-heads, as it were, thus distinguished, do issue and arise two sorts of external religious actions, or exercises: which we may not unfitly, for distinction's sake, call, personal and church actions. By personal actions I do understand such as arise from, and are performed immediately by the personal faith, and other graces of God, in the hearts of holy men. Of which sort are, private prayer, thanksgiving, and singing of psalms, profession of faith, and confession of sins, reading or opening the Scriptures, and hearing them so read, or opened, either in the family, or elsewhere, without any church power, or ministry coming between. Of the second sort, are the receiving in, and casting out of members, the electing and deposing of officers, the use of a public ministry, and all communion therewith. For which works, howsoever "faith" and other personal graces be required that men in them may "please God," Heb. xi. 6: yet are not these graces sufficient for the doing of them, except withal there concur, and come between, a Church state, and order: in, and by which, they are to be exercised, as by their most immediate and proper cause: from which, by the rule of reason, they are to have their denomination, and so to be called church actions.

And that the actions of the first kind, and more parti-

Hosted by Google

cularly, private prayer, of which I am specially to speak, may, and ought to be performed by godly persons, though out of the order of a true visible church, both the Scriptures and common reason teach: and that not only by them severally, and one by one, but jointly, and together also, as there is occasion: they being joint members of the mystical body of Christ by faith, and jointly partakers of the same Spirit of adoption, and prayer; from which common faith, and union of the Spirit dwelling in them, this communion ariseth, they thereby being privileged jointly to say, "Our Father:" as was also practised by Cornelius, and his holy family, though out of a true visible church. Matt. vi. 8—10, xv. 22, 23; Acts x. 1—3, 34, 35; Rom. viii. 26, x. 10; 1 Cor. xii. 7. Neither is it a matter worthy the proving lawful for a godly husband and wife jointly to sanctify their meat and drink by prayer, and thanksgiving, and so to beg together at God's hands, or to give thanks for other good things upon themselves, and theirs, though they be out of the order of a true church. Neither, indeed, do the members of the visible church perform private prayer, or the like exercises, whether severally, and by one and one, or jointly, by virtue of that their church state, or with any reference unto it, but merely as a duty of the Christian person, or family: (which must be before the Christian church, as the parts before the whole:) and which they were also as well, and as much bound unto, though they were of no visible church at all: no more than was Cornelius, and his family, and friends, which, notwithstanding, was his, and their fault.

These things thus premised, I come to the thing I aim at in this whole discourse, which is, that we, who profess a separation from the English national, provincial, diocesan, and parochial church, and churches, in the whole formal state and order thereof, may notwithstanding lawfully communicate in private prayer, and other the like holy exercises (not performed in their church communion, nor by their church power and ministry,) with the godly amongst them, though remaining, of infirmity, members of the same church, or churches, except some other extraordinary bar come in the way, between them and us.

Hosted by Google

And since the subject and ground of this communion, is holy persons, and the same so discerned mutually, and on both sides, I think it needful, for the clearer passage of things, and better information of divers both adversaries and friends, having greatly misinterpreted our writings and testimony, here briefly to note down what our judgment hath always been of the sincere faith and holiness of many particular persons in the assemblies, notwithstanding our testimony against the body of the same assemblies, in their communion, order, and ordinances.

And first, our witnessing against the Church of England, so called, as Babylon, in her degree, both in respect of the confusion, as of persons good and bad, of all sorts, so of things Christian, and antichristian, covering all: as also of that spiritual bondage, wherein the Lord's people are kept under the spiritual lordship of the prelacy, there reigning, doth witness for us against all men, that we acknowledge the Lord's people, and godly persons there: out of which they are therefore called by the voice of the Lord from heaven, to build up themselves "as lively stones into a spiritual temple" for the Lord to dwell in, Rev. xviii. 4; 1 Pet. ii. 5: as were the Lord's people of old called out of Babylon civil, to build the material temple in Jerusalem, although as then was, so now is too slack obedience yielded to the Lord's call herein. Ezra i. and vii.; Nehemiah ii.

More particularly. Mr. H. Barrowe in that his letter written a little before his death, and so the more advisedly, especially in that point, in which a snare was laid for his life, to an honourable lady yet living,* as he acknowledgeth her in her person, to have been educated and exercised in the faith and fear of God, so professeth he further, that he gladly embraceth, and believeth the common faith received, and professed in the land as good, and sound: that he had reverend estimation of sundry, and good hope of many hundred thousands in the land,

* Shortly before the execution of Henry Barrowe, he addressed the Letter to "an Honourable Lady, and Countess of his Kindred." It is dated "this 4th or 5th of the 4th month, 1593," and is contained in an "Apology or Defence of such true Christians as are commonly, but unjustly called Brownists," by Henry Ainsworth. 1604.

Hosted by Google

though he utterly disliked the present constitution of the church, &c.

Unto which his testimony as the authors of the "Apology"* do assent, so do they further profess their persuasion that of many the Lord's people in the realm, belonging to the Lord's election of grace, and partakers of his mercy to salvation in Christ, some are further called, and some still remain in defection: further instancing in sundry priests and friars, that have been martyrs of Jesus, witnessing the truth they saw against the Romish antichrist and yet retaining their popish functions, and communion with that church, which stands subject to the wrath of God: both Mr. Barrowe, and they accordingly in another place, commending the faith of the English martyrs, and deeming them saved, notwithstanding the false offices and great corruptions in the worship they exercised: and so professing the same judgment of others in the realm, where the same precious faith in sincerity and simplicity is found, they neither neglecting to search out the truth, nor de-pising it, when they see it, the mercy of God through their sincere faith to Jesus Christ, extending, and superabounding above all their sins seen and unseen.

Lastly, Mr. Penry, a little before his execution, acknowledgeth in his "Confession,"† that both of the teachers and professors of the assemblies have so embraced the truth of doctrine in the land established, and professed, that the Lord in his infinite goodness hath granted them favour, to show out wherein, in regard of God's election, he judgeth them members of the body, whereof the Son of God Jesus Christ is the head: only herein praying the Lord to be merciful unto them, as unto himself in regard of his sins, that they are not ordered in that outward order which Christ Jesus left in his church, but instead thereof, &c.

All these, we see, as they rightly distinguish between faith and order, though even order also be a matter of

* p. 113, 114. Vide last note. "The Apology" was the joint production of Johnson, Ainsworth, &c., though some editions are subscribed with Ainsworth's name alone.

† Vide Examinations of Barrowe, Greenwood, and Penry, pp. 39, 45, 4to edit., no date.

Hosted by Google

faith, if it be not a matter of sin, and without warrant from God's Word, Rom. xiv. 23: so do they plainly acknowledge the personal faith, and grace unto salvation in many though remaining (of ignorance, and infirmity) members of that church against whose constitution, order, and ordinances, they witnessed, divers of them, unto death: and not only, that such people were there in the general, but also that they did so esteem and judge of many of them, in particular. And surely if the Lord's people be there, it is no difficult thing for the spiritual man, conversing with them, to discern and judge ordinarily, which they be. The Spirit of God in one of his people will own itself in another of them though disfigured with many failings, especially in outward orders, and ordinances: and faith, if it be not dead, may be seen by works, of him that hath a spiritual eye, through many infirmities. James ii. 17, 18. "The tree," saith Christ, "is known by the fruits," Luke vi. 44: so may the good trees truly planted by faith into Christ, and having in them the heavenly sap and juice of his Spirit, though growing for the present, out of the Lord's walled orchard, the true visible church, and in the wild wilderness of the profane assemblies, ordinarily be known by the good fruits of faith and of the Spirit evidently appearing in their persons, whom, whilst the world can in all places so far discern, as to hate, despise, and persecute them, as none of theirs, it were marvel if we should not discern them to be children of the same common Father with us, and so know and acknowledge one another, though the world, which knows not him, know neither of both. 1 John iii. 1. And passing this judgment one upon another mutually, though not by the rule of certainty, which a man can have only of himself ordinarily, as only knowing his own heart, yet more than in hope, which extends itself to the apparently profane, for we are to hope that they who are not to-day, may be to-morrow, and even by that golden rule of love or charity, which "thinketh not evil," nor is suspicious, but "believeth all things," and taketh them in the best part: 1 Cor. xiii. 5, 7: "covering," especially under the graces of God's Spirit, where they appear, though in never so small a measure, "a multitude of sins;" 1 Pet. iv. 8; we shall walk

Hosted by Google

in love, after Christ's example, and fulfil the law of Christ by bearing one another's burden: thereby also procuring the like merciful measure to be meted out to us again both by God, and men, in respect of our infirmities. Eph. v. 2; Gal. vi. 2; Mark iv. 24.

Lastly, if men were to judge us, even whilst we abode in the assemblies of ignorance, or infirmity, men fearing God, and sanctified in our persons, by the profession and appearance which we made: then are we also in equity to make the same estimate of the persons of others, though abiding in the assemblies, as we did, making the same manifestation, and appearance, (and it may be greater than) the most of us have done. And, as we ourselves then having received of God the grace of sanctification, in our measure; and making manifestation thereof, according to that, we had received; and being to be judged by others according to the manifestation we made; did, and might justly look, that they should deem us truly faithful, and sanctified, though never so weakly: so are we to have again the like estimation of others, according to their measure received, and manifested: remembering always that most equal rule of Christ our Lord, that "whatsoever we would men should do unto us, even so to do to them, which is the law, and the prophets." Matt. vii. 12.

I will, therefore, conclude this point with a double exhortation: the former, respecting us ourselves, who have, by the mercy of God, with the faith of Christ, received his order, and ordinances; which is, that we please not ourselves therein too much, as if in them, piety and religion did chiefly consist: which was not the least calamity of the Lord's people of old, for which he also sharply reproved, and severely punished them; of which evil, and over valuation of these things, howsoever great in themselves, we are in the more danger, considering our persecutions, and sufferings for them: but that, as we believe these things are necessarily to be done, so we consider, that other things are not only not to be left undone, but to be done much more. The grace of faith in Christ, and the fear of God, the continual renewing of our repentance, with love, mercy, humility, and modesty, together with

Hosted by Google

fervent prayer, and hearty thanksgiving unto God, for his unspeakable goodness, are the things wherein especially we must serve God: nourishing them in our own hearts, and so honouring them in others, wheresoever they appear to dwell. Psa. xl. 6—8; Heb. x. 3; Psa. xxxi. 16, 17; Jer. vii. 4, 21—23; Hos. vi. 6; Mic. vi. 6—8. And if God will be known, and honoured in all his creatures, yea, even, in the silliest worm that crawleth upon the earth, how much more in the holy graces of his Spirit vouchsafed to his elect, notwithstanding their failings of infirmity, especially in outward ordinances! Which personal graces whilst too many have undervalued in other men, and neglected in themselves, in comparison, God hath been provoked to suffer so many amongst us to fall, some, into such personal sins and evils, notwithstanding their advantage in the Lord's ordinances, as from which, without these helps many thousands of them have been preserved: and others, both from the conscience of God's ordinances, and of the personal duties of holiness, and honesty; as is generally to be seen in such as have made apostacy from their former profession with us.

The other exhortation, I direct unto them about whom I deal: which is, that they content not themselves with that faith and grace in their persons, which they have received, rejecting, or neglecting, under any pretext or excuse whatsoever, the order, ordinances, and institutions of the Lord Jesus; by the use whereof, their faith should be nourished in itself, and manifested unto others: much more, that they continue not their submission to the contrary, which is of antichrist; lest God, besides greater evils, punish them with yet greater confusion, and bondage therein: that, under which they are, being such already, as, I suppose, I may truly affirm, that never church in the world, in which so many excellent truths were taught, stood in such confusion both of persons and things, and under such a bondage spiritual, as that of England doth at this day.

Now before I come to prove the thing I aim at, I think it fit to satisfy the principal objections, which I have taken knowledge of against the thing I intend.

Hosted by Google

Objection 1.

And it will first be demanded of me, considering my judgment of the parish assemblies, as antichristian, and of sundry the practices there as idolatrous, and withal, what judgments the Scriptures denounce against such estates, and practices, how I can deem any the members of such assemblies, and so practising, as truly Christian? or how I can, without pollution, communicate with them, who are by the touching of so many unclean, both persons and things, themselves made unclean?

Reason.

For answer. First, it is true, that upon the true church, the Scriptures do pronounce most excellent blessings; as they do also denounce fearful curses upon the false: as it is also true, that whatsoever is spoken of the whole body, the one or other, jointly, belongs to each member of either, severally: provided, that in both, things be in their right state and order: which is, that there be none but faithful and holy persons in the true church, and none but unholy and profane persons in the false: for none other should be, in the one or other. But, if now it come to pass otherwise, and that through the church's want of vigilance or zeal, and the party's hypocrisy, which hath been always, and is, too, too common, there be in the true church unfaithful and profane persons, shall we say, that those precious promises made to the true church in which they wrongfully are, do appertain unto them, and unto their persons? and that they are elect of God, saints by calling, and sanctified in Christ, to the hope of life, &c.? So if, on the contrary, it come to pass, through her craft and cruelty, and their own weakness, which is, too, too common also, that godly and faithful persons be in the false church, where they should not be, shall we now lay upon their persons all the curses, and condemnation, which the Scriptures denounce against the estate of the false church, and the superstitions thereof? Were not this to justify the wicked, because he is in the true church, where he should not be? and to condemn the righteous because he is in the

Hosted by Google

false church, where he should not be neither? Or, are not all godly-wise men in these, and the like disordered state of things, to have use of Christian discretion for the putting of difference between person and person, notwithstanding their common church-state, and order, the wicked with the godly in the true church, and under Christ's ordinances, and the godly with the wicked in the false church under the forgeries of antichrist? Otherwise, our judgment will be as confused as is their estate. Neither is it a more difficult thing, for a spiritual and unpartial eye to discern a godly man in a false church where the falseness ariseth not from the falsity of faith, but of order and ordinances, than to discern a wicked man in a true church.

And this consideration had, may serve for answer to the chief part of the objection: which is also no more in effect, than hath been answered by the authors of the "Apology," before me, (page 113) in their defence against that unjust accusation laid upon them by their adversaries, that they affirmed the whole realm to be drowned in confusion without assurance of salvation.

Their answer is, that "There is difference to be put between persons themselves, and between their actions or estate otherwise. The person sometimes is blessed, when the action or standing in another behalf, may be such as is subject to curse, &c. As on the contrary also, sometimes the person is subject to curse, when as yet the action or standing may be blessed in another respect." And both those parts of their distinction they prove by sundry instances from the Scriptures. Some whereof I will here note down, adding also some others thereunto, for the confirmation of the first head of the distinction, which more directly concerns the present question, which is about godly persons performing of, or standing in some corrupt and cursed actions or estate otherwise. Thus were Simeon, and Levi, both blessed in their persons, and cursed in their outrageous act against the Shechemites, Gen. xlix. 5, 7, 28: thus were the Canaanitish woman and her daughter, both dogs, or whelps, in respect of their nation and people, and children of Abraham in their persons, Matt. xv. 26—28: thus was Peter both a faithful and beloved disciple, in his person, and yet in his counsel to Christ, Satan, Matt. xvi.

Hosted by Google

16, 17, 23: thus were the Corinthians both unleavened and holy in their persons, and leavened or impure in the lump of their communion with the incestuous man uncensured amongst them, 1 Cor. v. 6, 7: as also the same Corinthians, both spiritual (though but babes in Christ), and yet in respect of their strife and divisions, not spiritual but carnal. 1 Cor. iii. 1, 3. Where the apostle also noteth out the original cause of these contrarieties in and about the same persons: and how it comes to pass, that one and the same man doth works so contrary one to another, and so subject, in respect thereof, to two so contrary estimates and censures. The reason then is, because every regenerate man, in this life, hath in him two men: the old man, not yet fully cast off; and the new man, though prevailing, yet not perfectly put on, and renewed, Eph. iv. 22—24: and these two, elsewhere called the flesh, and the Spirit; contrary the one to the other, and lusting the one against the other. Gal. v. 17. And so forcible is this lusting sin and flesh in the best, as that, it not only keeps them from knowing much truth which they should know, and from doing much good which they would do, and from doing that good they do, as they both should and would: but also misleadeth them into sundry aberrations, and evils, besides their falls into greater mischiefs, at times, out of which they are restored by particular repentance, and therein continueth them to their dying day. The apostle professeth of himself that he knoweth but in part, 1 Cor. xiii. 12, and how small a part of his knowledge is ours! The prophet David teacheth, that no man can understand his errors, and so prays God to cleanse him from his secret sins. Psa. xix. 12. And amongst, and above, those of all other kinds, the servants of God are still endangered by the errors and evils of the times: whose corrupt customs do often either dim their eyes, as a mist, or carry them along, as a strong stream: or otherwise oppress them with a thousand tyrannies. Examples of this mischief we have too many in the Scriptures. In Abraham's, Jacob's, David's, and many more holy patriarchs, and prophets, taking at once more wives than one, contrary to the institution of marriage, which was, that "two" (and not more) "should be one flesh." Gen. ii. 24; Matt. xix. 4. Likewise in Asa,

Hosted by Google

Amaziah, and Azariah their failings, in not taking away the high places, though the Holy Ghost give testimony of the uprightness of their hearts, and works otherwise, in the sight of the Lord. 1 Kings xv. 14; 2 Kings xiv. 3, 4, xv. 3, 4. Also, in many of the church of Corinth; continuing their accustomed fellowship, with their friends, and kindred, in their superstitious feastings in the idol temples, in honour of the idols, to which they offered.* 1 Cor. viii. 10; x. 13, 14, 20, 21; 2 Cor. vi. 14—16. Lastly, we have a plain proof of this evil in the apostles themselves, whom the common error of the times, that the Messiah should be a great, worldly prince, and exercise a temporal kingdom, did so possess, as that it could not be rooted out of them, by all that they had heard of Christ, and seen touching him; but that it still abode with them, till the death of Christ, yea, some while after his resurrection. Matt. xvi. 22, xx. 21; Mark ix. 34; Luke xxiv. 21; Acts i. 6. Which consideration, as it must work in all the servants of the Lord, a godly jealousy of the customs of the times, that they be not captived in their evils; so must it also teach them, who by the mercy of God have escaped them, much moderation towards such, being otherwise godly, as are still too much abused by their craft or violence.

To apply this, then, to the present purpose. Considering the many excellent truths taught in divers of the assemblies, and that with so great fruit in the knowledge, zeal, and other personal graces of many; the constant sufferings of divers martyrs for the truths there professed against that antichrist of Rome; the knowledge we had, of ourselves, in that estate; together with the judgment of other churches abroad, touching the Church of England, as it is called, though indeed ignorant of her estate, save in such general heads of faith, wherein we also assent unto her; as also the manifold afflictions upon, and great offences, and those, many too just, at such as have made separation from that church; it is no marvel, that so many (though otherwise learned and godly) by reason of the ignorance and infirmity yet cleaving to the best overmuch, are abused, by the times, for the succouring of antichrist in his declining age; for whose furtherance, in his rising,

* Herodot. in Clio.

Hosted by Google

through the corruptions of times then so many, howsoever otherwise learned and godly, have, though unwittingly, put to their hands, as all men, soundly minded, if but a little exercised in their writings, and the stories of the times, will confess.

Now for the second part of the objection, touching the idolatrous practices of the assemblies, I do answer, that every idolatry makes not an idolater, any more than every ignorance, or other sin of ignorance, an ignorant or wicked person. To make an idolater, there is required an idolatrous disposition, which we may not lay to their charge, of whom we speak. Besides, by this ground, we should challenge the reformed churches generally to be idolaters; for the most of them use a stint form of prayer, less or more, though they be not bound unto it; and so, consequently, should exclude them from God's kingdom; for no idolater hath any inheritance in the kingdom of heaven. Eph. iv. 3. And if any further object, that the Scriptures teach expressly, that they who partake of the sins of Babylon, shall receive of her plagues: and that every man worshipping that beast, and his image, and receiving his mark in his forehead or in his hand, shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, &c., Rev. xviii. 4; xiv. 9, 10. I answer, as before, that that estate, and those practices are, indeed, under that curse in themselves; and further also, that every person so walking, as I am persuaded every member of the Church of England doth, is under that condemnation without repentance: which repentance, as it must be particular for sins known, so doth the Lord, in mercy, accept of the general repentance of his servants, for their sins unknown and secret, and which they discern not to be such: otherwise no flesh could be saved. Psa. xix. 12. Lastly, as I cannot excuse them, nor they themselves, from great sin in joining themselves with the profane parish assemblies, with which God hath not joined them; and that in the practice of their superstitions, especially, in such a bondage spiritual under the prelacy, as makes them cease to be the Lord's free people, and deprives them of all power for the reformation of public evils, either of persons, or things; so that being, as I hope, but their sins of infirmity, and by them unseen,

Hosted by Google

though we discern them, as it may be, they also discern some evils in us, which we see not in ourselves, they no more dissolve the bond of the Spirit between their and our persons, than they destroy the work of the same Spirit in themselves: neither can these their sins pollute me, if by the default of my place or person I leave no means lawful unused, for their reformation: who, if they either purposely neglect to search out the truth, or unfaithfully withhold it in unrighteousness, for any fleshly fear, or other corrupt regard, shall not, for our more respective judgment of them, or practice towards them, receive the more easy judgment at the hands of the Lord, in the day of the revelation of the secrets of all hearts.

Objection 2.

As he that hath hold of one member of the body, is not separated from the body, nor any part thereof, but hath hold of the whole body by the natural coherence of the parts: so he that communicates with one member of the church, communicates and joins with the whole, and every member thereof, by answerable coherence of the parts of that mystical body.

Answer.

In communicating with the godly, there, in private prayer, and the like exercises, we do not communicate with them, as members of the church, but merely as Christians, private prayer being, as hath been showed, no church action at all, nor performed either by them, or us, by virtue of any church-state, or membership, or with any respect thereunto: but merely as by persons, made partakers, by the grace of God, of the Spirit of adoption, and prayer, mutually. Rom. viii. 13, 26, 27.

Objection 3.

If we may thus communicate with them in private, and they with us, why not also in public?

Answer.

It followeth not, that, because I may partake with godly men in things lawful, and lawfully done, therefore, in things, unlawful in themselves, as are many things, or un-

Hosted by Google

lawfully done, as are all things in their public communion. More particularly. In communicating with the godly in public, even in things good in themselves, I partake with all the profane parish also: the minister being the minister of the whole parish, and to speak as the truth is, the parish priest; and so in his public administration, offering up the souls and bodies, and the prayers withal of the parish church, in the name of Christ, and therein, with a few clean, many unclean beasts, upon the Lord's altar: whereas the private communion I intend, is restrained to the godly only, though wicked persons be in the place. Secondly, whereas, in private, I communicate only with the persons and personal graces of holy men; in public, I communicate with their church-state and order, as also with the public ministry, and in, and with it, with the prelacy, whence it is: of which more hereafter. Neither yet may we admit them into communion of the public ordinances with us, till they be actually members of a true and lawful public body ecclesiastical, or visible church. As they are private Christian persons, so we may partake with them in private Christian duties; but may not admit them to public church communion, though never so holy persons, till they have a true and lawful church-state, and calling thereunto. And here that general rule hath place, that whatsoever is done by any person, though both he and it, in themselves, never so holy, without a just calling, is sin unto him.

Objection 4.

But with men uncircumcised, and which might not enter into the temple, the Jews were forbidden all communion by the law of God. Acts xi. 2, 3; xxi. 28.

Answer.

But they, of whom we speak, are not unbaptized, but such as, with the outward baptism, (the same with our own) though both unlawfully administered, have, also, received the inward baptism of the Spirit: though they cannot have, in that their estate, all the right ends and uses of baptism. Secondly, I find not, where the law of God so said: but rather think it may be proved, that the circum-

Hosted by Google

cised Israelites, coming out of Egypt, had communion in the wilderness, though not in all things, with the uncircumcised, both Israelites and others. Exod. xii. 38; Numb. xi. 4. But admit the law so forbade. It must be considered that the matter of Peter's trouble was, "his going in to men uncircumcised, and eating with them," and it will then appear that there was a legal and ceremonial restraint and bondage, under which the Jewish church was, as a child in his nonage, from which the church now, as a man of fuller age, is free. Gal. iv. 1—4. And by the Jews not communicating privately, or not eating with any uncircumcised (if so, by the law, they were forbidden, and that it were not rather a tradition, as Calvin thinketh), and by their not admitting any such into the temple, which is evident, we are taught not to communicate with, nor to receive into the church, any uncircumcised in heart, so by us discerned; but are not forbidden all private religious communion with unbaptized persons, if appearing holy, much less to go in and eat with them; no, nor yet to receive such, neither into the now temple, the church of God, 1 Cor. x. 27, into which indeed they must be received before they can be baptized. And, for the instance, Acts xi. considering that Christ, at his death, had "broken down the partition wall, and in his flesh abolished the enmity of the law of commandments, standing in ordinances," Eph. ii. 14, 15, and that Peter, by his apostolical commission, was to "teach all nations," Matt. xxviii. 19; and how his opposites had "heard that the Gentiles had received the word," and therewith the Spirit of God, it could be none but they of the circumcision, that is, such as being themselves circumcised, did think there could be no grace without it, (with which mischief Satan laboureth, always, to possess the hearts of such as enjoy God's ordinances, as theirs, on the other side, who enjoy them not, to undervalue them,) who would thus contend, or quarrel with the apostle of Christ, and the same, to speak as the truth is, manifesting himself to be too Jewishly affected, for that his practice, Acts x. 14; Gal. ii. 1, 12, 14. And, methinks, by the Lord's charge unto Peter, "not to call that profane which God had purified," Acts x. 15, and with it, by Peter's testimony afterwards, v. 34, 35, that "they that fear God

Hosted by Google

and work righteousness, are accepted of God," whether circumcised or not circumcised, baptized or not baptized, so there be no contempt of God's ordinances, but only human frailty hindering, as it was with Cornelius, in his not being circumcised formerly; and so ought to be accepted of his people, so far as God accepteth of them; and that, by Christ's example in receiving the prayers of, and therein communicating with, the faithful centurion, though out of the visible church and uncircumcised, Matt. viii. 5—13, personally and privately, with whom he would not have communicated in the temple, into which, for order's sake, he might not have been admitted; we, also, have warrant for communicating with godly persons, privately; with whom, for their disordered estate that way, we can have no lawful public communion.

Fifth Objection.

But thus to acknowledge any in the assemblies, for our brethren, and partakers of the same common grace and faith with us, unto life, is to confirm them in their evil ways, and as if we should tell them, that to do more, or otherwise, than they do, were in vain.

Answer.

This exception is unworthy of any godly-wise man, who hath learnt aright, either to worship God, or to converse with men. Exception might, as justly, have been made against the apostle's doctrine, and practice, for receiving and applying unto the weak in things lawful for their edification and gaining, and the discharge of his own duty, Rom. xiv. 1; 1 Cor. ix. 22; and, as justly, might men have told him, that he had taken a course to continue and harden them in their sin; for that, their weakness, was their sin. The equity of the apostle's doctrine and practice is general, and directs all God's people, at all times, towards all that are weak in the faith, any manner of way; as are those that fear God in the assemblies, (how strong soever otherwise,) in respect of their church-state, and ordinances.

The same apostle, writing to the Corinthians, whom he was, in the body of his epistle, to reprove for many evils

Hosted by Google

amongst them, doth in the first place give them their due, with the most, acknowledging them "sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, enriched with the grace of God by Christ Jesus, in all utterance, and in all knowledge." 1 Cor. i. 2, 4, 5. The same manner of proceeding, also, the apostle John useth, being directed by the same good Spirit, towards the churches in Asia, upon the like occasion. Rev. ii. 1—3, 12—14, 18—20. And, as their practices are (in their common equity) our instructions, so doth both the law of love and rule of reason direct us the same course. When men see us ready to take knowledge, and in acknowledging of the good things in them, they will much more willingly listen to our just reproofs of their evils, as deeming us equally and lovingly affected towards them: which good things if, on the contrary, we neglect or undervalue in any manner of way, they will, and that justly, be prejudiced against us, as unequal and looking at them only with the left eye. Besides, there are no arguments so forcible, either for admonition or exhortation, to them that have any spark of grace in them, as those which are taken from the mercies of God, whereof they are made partakers. Rom. xii. 1. Neither will any of God's children, indeed, make that use, either of the knowledge which themselves have, or acknowledgement which others make, of the grace of God in them, to be emboldened thereby to go on in evil; for this were to "turn the grace of God into wantonness," which only the reprobates do, Jude 4, no more than will a good child, when he knows by himself, or hears by others, that his father hath made sure his inheritance unto him, take, thereby, liberty to despise his commandments, and no further to regard him: this were a bastardly practice, and from which a child naturally disposed would abhor.

To conclude then, this our judgment, and answerable practice, touching the better sort in the assemblies, as faithful persons, and under the assurance of salvation, is no hindrance to the further manifestation of their faith, in withdrawing their feet from every evil way, and the planting them in the Lord's house; but on the contrary, a real exhortation, and provocation of them to keep safe that their precious faith in a good conscience in all things,

Hosted by Google

as the passenger in the ship, 1 Tim. i. 19: and in the obedience of all Christ's commandments, to make their election more sure to themselves, Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; 2 Pet. i. 10, and so to work out their salvation with fear and trembling, Phil. ii. 12; always providing for themselves the prophet's assurance, which was, that he should not be ashamed, when he had respect to all God's commandments. And this may serve, not only, for an answer to the objection, but also, for an argument for the thing intended.

Objection 6.

But Christ hath left an order for the reformation of every brother falling into sin, which cannot be observed towards any of them whom we cannot therefore thus acknowledge, and communicate with accordingly. Matt. xviii. 15—17.

Answer.

This, indeed, showeth, that they are without the order of Christ in his church, in which they ought to be; but doth not therefore, conclude them not to be our brethren, or God's children, or that there is no bond of faith and the Spirit between their and our persons. And, by this ground, we should not repute a godly person though actually separated, our brother, nor keep private communion with him: nor any at all with the reformed church, or with any their members; who are too much wanting in this order. But, as we may communicate with thousands in England, as with holy persons, in private exhortations, and admonitions, so may we also, in private prayer, though in neither the one, nor other, publicly, as hath formerly been showed. And this I, also, conceive to have the force of another argument for the practice.

Objection 7.

The Lord Jesus hath promised so far to hear men's prayers, as they agree together in the things they ask: which cannot be between them and us, seeing they are to pray for the prosperous estate of their church, communion, government, and ministry, against which we both pray and witness. Matt. xviii. 19.

Hosted by Google

Answer.

There are thousands in the assemblies, who, whatsoever through human frailty, their practice be, pray for little more, in effect, in the Church of England, than we do. And, secondly, though there be between them and us some differences, yet may the same be so carried by Christian discretion, and moderation mutual, as that our prayers be not interrupted. And though we must agree in the particulars, which we expressly pray for, yet if we may not join in prayer with them, with whom we have particular differences, how shall we pray with almost any the members of the reformed churches? yea, what two churches, or persons in the same church, should not at one time or other refuse prayer together? But divers inconveniences will, I doubt not, arise in this practice, as there do many, in all our doings: which we must, therefore, labour to prevent, or moderate by godly wisdom, and not abandon for them things otherwise lawful.

Objection 8.

If this practice may be warranted with them, why not with sundry papists also, and much more, with many excommunicants out of the church for some particular sin?

Answer.

The faith of Rome, and so of papists, indeed, cannot by the Word of God be proved true, justifying faith; nor the spirit received by that faith, the spirit of prayer, which God hath promised to hear. But the faith published in the name of the Church of England, and professed by many there, personally, is to be esteemed such by the Word of God. Neither are we now come to a diverse faith, but to a diverse order, from that there prevailing: in submission whereunto we think ourselves bound to make further manifestation of our faith, than there we did, or could do. And for excommunicates, there is this apparent difference, that, whereas we are to apply ourselves to the other, not yet come so far, what we may for their further provocation; we are, on the contrary, to withdraw ourselves

Hosted by Google

from them, what we may for their humbling, both in spiritual communion, and civil familiarity: their estate in the one, and other, putting a special bar between them and us. 1 Cor. v. 11.

Objection 9.

But this will endanger the bringing in of great confusion, when one man will thus esteem of, and walk towards one, a second another, and a third will be otherwise minded towards them both.

Answer.

The very same might have been objected against Paul's doctrine of application to the weak: and it might have been said; one will judge this man but weak, another that man, but a third neither of them, but both obstinate; what confusion will here be! Rom. xiv. 1; 1 Cor. ix. 22. So, for our walking towards the members of the Dutch, and French churches. Have we not administered publicly to some of either, which, unto some others of them, we would not do? The same course we hold in our private walking. Yea, do we not sundry times fall into the same difficulties in our public communion, being diversely minded in the receiving in, and casting out of members? In all which cases, we must have use of Christian discretion in ourselves, and moderation one towards another: and must study, not only how to effect that which ourselves think best, but how, to bear the contrary, with the least offence, if it be not intolerable.

And thus much for the objections against this practice: the reasons to justify it follow.

Reasons.

1. Arg.—The former grounds being held, and more specially, that private prayer is no church action, nor done by any church power, or order, but merely personal, both Mr. Bernard's argument, "that we are taught by our Saviour Christ, to join in prayer, and to say, 'Our Father,' with them, whom we judge the children of God;" as also Mr. Ames', that "we may have visible communion with them, whom we rightly discern to have communion with

Hosted by Google

Christ,"* are of force, to wit, according to the limitations and distinctions formerly made. Matt. vi. 6; Gal. iii. 26; 1 John i. 3.

2. Arg.—As all communion in actions presupposeth an union of persons, so doth every union of persons, necessarily, draw with it communion in works, as a natural effect thereof. Which, as it is true in Christ the head first, with whose merits and grace no man can communicate, till by faith he be united to his person, and with which all so united do necessarily partake; so is it in the members mutually, who must first be knit together by that one faith, and one Spirit, and so being united must preserve the unity and walk in the communion thereof. John xv. 4, 5; Titus i. 3; Philem. 6; Eph. iv. 3. We are to walk in the common works of humanity with every man, according to that common bond: in the works of kindred, or friendship, as with a friend, or kinsman: of common Christianity, with a Christian: and so in the works of church communion with the members of the true church. As, then, God hath united us in our persons, by faith, and the Spirit, under one head, Christ, with many in the assemblies, so are we also to unite ourselves, in the exercises of those our personal graces, notwithstanding the human infirmities, especially about outward ordinances, appearing in us, or them.

3. Arg.—There was between them in the assemblies, who feared God, and us, before our separation a bond of the Spirit, and we might lawfully pray together for lawful things, personally. And hath our growth in the knowledge, and obedience of the will of God, dissolved that bond, they remaining the same they were, and it may be growing, further also, therein? Surely, such is the nature, and so great the strength of this bond of the Spirit, to them who duly consider it, with that reverence which is meet, as that many and great infirmities cannot break it. And by reason of it, and of many other, so excellent things, there to be found, it deeply concerneth us to weigh with ourselves, in what respect, and how far, we make our separation: that, as we make not the good things there, as snares to entangle our souls in the things which are evil,

* Vide Letters between Mr. Ames and Mr. Robinson, pp. 85—87, *supra*.

Hosted by Google

so that neither for the evils, unavoidable in the public ordinances there, we throw away all at a venture, as some ill-advised do. And if two godly persons of them may lawfully pray together, privately, for lawful things, why not we with either, or both of them? Do we lose any lawful liberty in a common Christian duty, by breaking of our unlawful course, and standing? If not, then neither can this course be justly reproved, neither should we debar ourselves of our Christian liberty herein. Gal. v. 1.

4. Arg.—As we are not, for infirmities and corruptions, to refuse the fellowship of a true Christian church in things lawful, but, by all good means, to endeavour her reformation, whilst there is any hope: so, neither, are we to refuse the fellowship of a true Christian person, so appearing, in things lawful, for his infirmities and corruptions, especially, till he appear unto us obstinate and irrecoverable therein.

5. Arg.—Lastly, To repute them holy persons, and partakers of the same precious faith with ourselves, as I have showed you before, we have always done, notwithstanding their church state, and yet, not to join with them in the personal works of faith, no extraordinary bar coming between, seemeth a denial of that in deed, which in word is professed: and all one, if not worse, as if one man should profess of another, that he held him his special friend, but would neither perform to him, nor receive from him, any duty of special friendship: or, that he deemed him a very honest man, but yet would neither trust him, nor have otherwise to deal with him, for a farthing.

For conclusion then let us follow the counsel of the apostle, to proceed by one rule, whereunto we are come, Phil. iii. 16: under hope that God will further reveal the truth in those particulars unto them, who are otherwise minded: as also following his example, in becoming all to all in the things which are lawful. Phil. iii. 16. And above all things let love abound in us, which will teach us, as many other good lessons, so this amongst the rest, not to cover the good graces of God, in men, under their infirmities, but contrariwise, their infirmities, under the graces of God's Spirit in them. Prov. x. 12; 1 Pet. iv. 8.

But lest this practice, and the grounds thereof be further

Hosted by Google

strained, than I intend, or than it will reach, I think it here meet to add a few things, for the just and lawful bounding of it.

CHAPTER II.

OF PUBLIC COMMUNION.

As we are, then, to join ourselves with them, wherein God hath joined us; so are we, wherein he severeth us, to sequester and sever ourselves. And this I verily believe he doth, in their and our church communion, service, order of government, ministry, and ministrations. If the parish assemblies, gathered by compulsion, of all the parishioners promiscuously; the provincial, diocesan, and lordly government; the ministry thence derived, with the service-book, and administrations accordingly, be of God; then is our fellowship, only of persons sanctified, at least outwardly, joining themselves by voluntary profession under the government and ministry of an eldership; conceiving prayers and thanksgivings, according to the churches' present occasions, by the teachings of the Spirit, and so administering the sacraments according to the simplicity of the gospel, not of God, nor from heaven. If on the contrary, ours be of God, and of his Christ; then is theirs of antichrist, God's and Christ's adversary. Either the one or other are plantings which God hath not planted, and shall be rooted up. We will briefly consider of the particulars.

And first, the word, "kahal," in Hebrew; in Greek, "ecclesia;" in English, "church;" signifieth, a company of people called out; and that in respect both of the voice or will of the caller, and obedience of the called: and so, restrained to religious use, signifieth a company of people called, and come out of the state of nature, into the state of grace; out of the world, into the kingdom of Christ. Who are therefore entitled, "saints" by calling, and "sanctified," or separated, "in Christ Jesus:" the temple, "house," and "household of God," and "kingdom of heaven," and "of God." 1 Cor. i. 2; Eph. ii. 19—21; 1 Tim. iii. 15; Matt. xiii. 24; xxi. 43; Acts i. 3. And

Hosted by Google

since the church is neither a natural, nor a civil, but a spiritual state, it must not be gathered, nor consist, of natural, or civil, or other than spiritual persons. And this will yet better appear, if we consider it, as the Scriptures direct us, as the body of Christ, under him the head; unto which therefore it must be conformable in every part, by the indwelling of his Spirit, effectually working in the measure thereof. Eph. i. 22, 23; iv. 15, 16; Col. i. 24.

2ndly, Unto the true church, appertain the covenant and promises, the ministry, sacraments, and services of God, with all the holy things of God and of Christ, Rom. ix. 4; 1 Cor. iii. 21, 22: which must, therefore, be gathered, and consist of such persons, as unto which, these things belong in communion, and by common right. And both the Scriptures, and common reason teach, that whomsoever the Lord doth call, and use to and in any special work, and employment, he doth, in a special manner, separate and sanctify them thereunto. And so the church, being to be employed in the special service of God, to the glory of his special love, and mercy in their happiness, and to show forth his virtues, must be of such persons, as by, and in whom, he will, and may thus be worshipped, and glorified: and as are by him, both in their persons, and fellowship, separated and sanctified thereunto.

But here, the authors of a certain treatise published against M. de Lescluse,* charge him with much falsehood, for affirming all true churches from the beginning of the

* "The Shield of Defence, written against Master De Leluse, in defence of Master Brightman, 1612." Supposed to be written by Christopher Lawne and his party. De Leluse's name is thus variously written by different authors, De Cluse, De les Cluse, Cluse, De la Cluse. He belonged to the French church at Amsterdam, but became a Separatist from that church on account of its "known evils," and held the office of elder in the church, over which Henry Ainsworth was pastor. On the death of Mr. Ainsworth, the church divided; one portion chose M. de Lescluse as their pastor, and the other Mr. Canne. The title of de Lescluse's work is not known. He translated Henry Ainsworth's treatise on "Communion of Saints" into French, and thus subscribed—"Translaté d'Anglois en François, par Jean de Lescluse."

Vide "A Defence of Church Government, &c.," by John Paget, 1641. And Hanbury's "Historical Memorials," vol. i. p. 260, 337, 516, and vol. ii. p. 59.

Hosted by Google

world, to have been established by this separation, which we, whom they call Brownists, as the Church of England calls them Puritans, do desire. And for this they desire it may be showed, how the church of God before the flood was gathered by such a separation, to wit, of the godly, from the profane; for this is the separation we desire. And know they not, that God, in establishing the first church of the gospel, "put enmity," which is more than separation, "between the seed of the woman, Christ and the faithful in him: and the seed of the serpent, Satan, and the wicked with him their father," Gen. iii. 15; iv. 12, 16; John viii. 44; which separation also stood so firm, as the sons of God might not so much as take them wives of the daughters of men. Gen. vi. 2—5. Or if these men will have marriage, as by their practice they make it, a church action, then they see an express separation for church communion before the flood.

And where they further allege that the Dutch and French churches which we acknowledge for true churches, were not established by such a separation, as we make, they accuse them unjustly, to excuse themselves.

They were, at the first, established of a sanctified people, by voluntary profession separating themselves into particular churches from the profane multitudes in the places and parishes where they lived, and that with great persecution: and so do still continue a separated people, though, through continuance of time and peace, they, as all other churches use to do, have lost of their first purity and zeal. Were or are any compelled into them by penal laws? Or do they consist of all the parish inhabitants, as the English parishional churches were, and do? Doth not M. de Lescluse and we all and these men themselves know, that scarce one of ten in the parish, is of the church in the whole country throughout? How do they then reproach the churches of God, (contrary to their own, and all men's knowledge,) as not being a separated people from the profane multitude? The thing is, they would by casting dirt and mire in other men's faces, make their own seem the fairer.

That the Dutch and French churches condemn our separation, or schism, is neither to the purpose nor true; neither can they name one church that ever passed any

Hosted by Google

such censure upon us; neither hath any one learned and godly man amongst them (to my knowledge) ever gone about to refute our practice or confession, though published both in Dutch and Latin unto them; which, notwithstanding, they have done in their public writings generally, against such heretics and schismatics as have been amongst them. It is more both pertinent and true, that the Church of England, for which these men plead, condemns them, her proctors, as schismatics, and excommunicates for their wicked errors.

If Mr. Johnson confess, as they tell us, the Church of England a true church, he must be able to prove it established by separation, and a separated body in the constitution. He, with the rest, has formerly defined "a true visible church, a company of people called, and separated from the world by the Word of God," &c., and proved the same by many scriptures.*

And to conceive of a church, which is the body of Christ and household of God, not separated from the profane world, which lieth in wickedness, is to confound heaven and earth, and to agree Christ with Belial, 1 John v. 19; and in truth, the most profane and dangerous error which, this day, prevails amongst them that fear God; and by which Christianity is more exposed to the contempt of Turks and Jews, than by any other evil.

But here a defence, by many made and much set by, must be considered of; which is, That the wicked and profane in the parishes, though frequenting the same place with the rest, are not of the church; but only they who fear God, and make conscience of their ways.

If they said no other should be of the church, though coming into the same place, it were true; but to argue from that which should be, to that which is, when that is not which should be, is unsound and presumptuous; as is that indeed of all other defences, most frivolous. Thus might the Corinthians have answered Paul, that the incestuous man was not of the church, though he frequented the same place with them. 1 Cor. v. 1—6. And if this defence were good, the greatest part of the ministers of the church should not be of the church; for the greatest

* Confess. of Faith, Apol. Posit. 3, Art. 17.

Hosted by Google

part, from the prelate to the paritour,* are (God knoweth) irreligious and unconscionable persons. For conclusion, then, we all know that the ministers, parsons, vicars, or curates, are appointed, and so called, the parish priests, and are accordingly to minister; offering up the parish prayers and sacrifices, and of the parishes to receive tithes and offerings, as their duties; to marry, church after child-birth, baptize, and bury, all that are married, delivered of child, born, and do die in their parishes; and so to give the Lord's Supper to every one of them at sixteen years old. If it be said the minister may suspend, and so procure, if they reform not, the excommunication of all unworthy persons; admit it; and even this proves the whole parish, yea, the most wicked with the rest, to be the church. For, otherwise, what needed they to be suspended? or, how could they be excommunicated, since the church is not to judge them which are without, but them which are within?

Let all them, then, that fear God, know and consider, that when they come to worship in the parish assemblies, they join themselves where God hath not joined them, and acknowledge that society for the true church of God and communion of saints, which he hath not sanctified for that purpose; that they offer their solemn sacrifices out of the true temple, made of lively stones, 1 Pet. ii. 5; Deut. xii. 5—7, where alone they should present them; that in eating of one bread, they make themselves one body with them, 1 Cor. x. 17, and them members of Christ, who are, for the present, apparent limbs of Satan; and that, in saying "Our Father" with them, they acknowledge them for the children of God, who, in the persuasion of their own consciences, are of their father, the devil, and do his lusts. John viii. 44.

And, which is most of all to be observed, and wherein those parish assemblies do differ from all true churches in the world, this mischief is not casual, and falling in by occasion, but of the very first frame and constitution; into which false brethren and wicked men have not crept privily, as into the churches of God of old, and of late also, but have been, and are, by bodily punishments, pub-

* Apparitor—an inferior officer of the Ecclesiastical Court.

Hosted by Google

licly and openly into them constrained, and in them continued. Gal. ii. 4; Jude 4. Neither, in this confusion, did the wicked intrude and thrust themselves into the fellowship of holy assemblies, as in true churches is too commonly to be seen; but, on the contrary, the godly, few as they were and yet are in comparison, did unite and mingle themselves (after their dispersion in popery) in and into the profane parishes, where their outward estates and occasions lay. And, secondly, Whereas the true churches of Christ enjoy his presence and power, for the purging out of persons appearing ungodly and incorrigible, Matt. xviii. 17; 1 Cor. v. 4, 5; Heb. xii. 15; Gal. v. 12; 2 Thess. iii. 14; these parishional assemblies want not only all such power, in them or their ministers, which the prelates and their substitutes have seized into their hands, and for the stablishing of whose state, and advantage of whose honour and profit it is to have them no better, but even all possibility of reformation, except they cease to be gathered by their parish perambulation, as they are, instead of holy, voluntary, and personal profession of faith, and confession of sins, as they should be.

Now touching their solemn, and set book-service, thus much. Since the Lord hath nowhere commanded, or required in his Word, which is the only rule for his worship, any human, and apocryphal writings to be used in his church to worship him by, much less to be read, by stint, for prayer, it is unlawful for any of God's servants to submit unto any such voluntary religion, through humbleness of mind, or for any other cause, Col. ii. 23: or to partake in the holy things of God by it administered: lest they worship in vain, and God reprove them, saying, "Who hath required these things at your hands?" Matt. xv. 9.

But they tell us, that Christ hath taught his disciples when they prayed, to say, "Our Father," &c. True, but I deny it to be Christ's meaning to bind them to these very words: as the ministers are bound to say their "Certain." For neither do the two evangelists use the very same words: neither, if that were Christ's meaning, were it lawful to use any other form of words.

For he saith, "When you pray," that is, whensoever you pray, "say," &c., Luke xi. 2: and he who prays not, as Christ

Hosted by Google

there teacheth, offers strange fire before the Lord. He, then, there teacheth to pray without hypocrisy and vain babbling, and with faith, and perseverance: though I doubt not, but these words also, being applied to present occasions, and without opinion of necessity, may be used. But admit Christ's meaning were to tie his disciples to a form of words: will the bishops, therefore, presume to impose upon men, another form of words, and so another form, and manner of worship? which, if Christ tied his disciples to worship him by a certain form of words, they appointing another form of words for his worship, they undeniably do. Will they thus walk cheek by jowl with Christ in his house, and set up "their thresholds by God's," Ezek. xliii. 8, and appoint a new manner of worshipping God, and so a new will of God, as indeed they do?

M. de Lescluse's forenamed adversaries demand, touching a prayer of his in the end of his book, whether any of his flock in reading of that his prayer, may lift up their heart, and say Amen to his petition. If not, then, say they, It is a sorry prayer, &c.: if they may, then according to our doctrine, he sets up a golden calf, or erects an idol, by setting down this form of prayer: and they, which in the reading of it, lift up their hearts in prayer to desire the same thing, commit idolatry.*

Nothing is absolutely, or in itself, an idol: but in relation to, and respect of the end, to which it is appointed and used. And we do, therefore, repute the service-book an idol, because it is, and is appointed to be read by the minister, for his, and the church's prayers. But what proportionable to this hath M. de Lescluse's prayer? Is it appointed by him to this end, or by the church with him so used? It is published by him for the manifestation unto others of his desire, that they by reading the same privately, might be admonished of, and provoked unto their duty. It is his prayer, but their instruction, and provocation: and so by them to be read, and used. And for the inward lifting up of the heart, is nothing to the question in hand; which is about the outward exercise, and manifestation of prayer. A man in reading, or hearing read, Paul's Epistles: or in singing, or hearing sung, David's Psalms,

* A Shield of Defence, &c., pp. 38, 39.

Hosted by Google

or in opening, or hearing opened those, or any other scriptures in the church, may say, "Amen," to any truth, or desire in his heart that the good things in them contained may be accomplished, and come to pass. Are therefore these scriptures and sermons the prayers of the church? or, which is the very point, is the reading, singing, preaching, and hearing of them the church's exercise of prayer, or praying? We doubt not but it is lawful to read privately the prayers, or sermons of any godly men that come to our hands for instruction, and provocation in and unto any good duty, and to have the heart therewith affected accordingly: but to conclude, that therefore it is lawful to bring the same into the church, and to read them publicly for that end, and, which is more, that the so reading of them is the preaching, and praying which the ministers of Christ are to give themselves unto, Acts vi. 4: and for their furnishing whereunto, he giveth them the special gifts of his Spirit, 1 Cor. xii. 4, 7, 8; is to make ropes of sand: both will hold alike, and are indeed alike childish. But let us a little further weigh their words. They call it De Lescluse's prayer, because he penned it: acknowledging therein, that their church service is the prayers of the bishop or chaplain that penned them: and the manifestation of the Spirit given to him, that is dead, and rotten. Whereas the ministers of Christ have received their proper measure of the manifestation of the Spirit to profit withal: by which their infirmities are holpen, and they taught to pray, as they ought, and as are the church's necessities, and occasions. 1 Cor. xii. 7; Rom. viii. 28.

They further call this "the reading of De Lescluse's prayer:" and therein confess their church's praying to be reading. And is reading praying? or are not these two distinct exercises, and for divers ends? Do men read to God, which if to read be to pray, they must do? In praying, we pour matter out of the heart: but in reading we receive matter in: as common reason teacheth. How ignorant then or obstinate soever men are in their customs, and traditions received from their ancestors, their set service read for prayer is but a human device for God's worship (and that unreasonable also:) and so an idol and against the second commandment; with which no

Hosted by Google

fellowship is to be had. Which whilst these men, and others will not learn of God, by us, whose persons they despise, but will still plead for it, as they do; most justly do they provoke God to punish them, and their fellows by it, as he doth. It is just, that whilst one kindleth, and another bloweth, and a third offereth this strange fire, they should together be scorched with the flame of it.

It now remains, I add a few things touching the government ecclesiastical, and ministry. But for that it becometh all honest, and modest men to be more forward in defending their own, than in reproving other men's doings; and that many loud clamours of Anabaptistry, and popularity are raised against our government, I think it meet, briefly, to insert a few things touching our profession, and practice therein.

The government of the church, then, as it is taken most strictly for the outward ordering, directing, and guidance of the same church in her affairs, (for in a more general sense the whole administration of Christ's kingdom by himself, or others, inwardly, or outwardly, publicly, or privately, may be comprehended under the government of the church,) we place in the bishops, or elders thereof, called by Christ, and the church to feed, that is to teach, and rule the same. Acts xx. 17, 20; 1 Tim. v. 17. Which their government, and the nature thereof, I will plainly lay down in such particulars, as wherein the people's liberty is greatest: which are reduced to these three heads: 1. Exercise of prophesying: 2. Choice of officers: and 3. Censuring of offenders.

And 1. For the exercise of prophesying; wherein men, though not in office, have liberty to move, and propound their questions, and doubts for satisfaction, as also having received a gift, to administer the same, unto edification, exhortation, and comfort. As then Paul, and Barnabas coming into the synagogue of the Jews, where they were no officers, the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them after the lecture of the law, if they had any word of exhortation to the people, to say on, Luke ii. 46; Rom. xii. 6; 1 Pet. iv. 10; 1 Cor. xiv.; Acts xiii. 14, 15 (which order the Jews also observe in their synagogues at this day): so with us, the officers after their ordinary teaching, signify,

Hosted by Google

and exhort unto the use of, the like liberty, in that, and the other particulars formerly named: and so, as there is occasion, open and explain things obscure and doubtful: reprove things unsound and impertinent: and so order, moderate, and determine the whole exercise by the Word of God. And in this I suppose it appears to all men, that the officers govern.

For the choice of officers, we do take for our directions the practices of the apostles, and apostolical church, Acts i. and vi. and xiv., grounded upon a perpetual equity, that men should choose them under Christ, unto whose faithfulness, under the same Christ, and by his appointment, they are to commit themselves, and their souls: and them, as Christ's, and their servants to maintain: in any one of which examples, the conscience of a godly man is better established, than in all the canons of popes, or prelates, or other devices of politic men whatsoever, departing from the apostolical simplicity. I will instance in one example where this point is most largely and clearly set down; unto which therefore the rest must be referred, and by it other places, handling the same matter more briefly, explained, and opened. We do read, Acts vi., how the apostles call together the multitude; show them the necessity of choosing deacons, what their work is, and how they must be qualified, and how many they would have chosen: whom, being chosen accordingly, by the multitude, they ordain; sanctifying the whole action with prayer. Where it is evident, that though the calling did chiefly depend upon the multitude, yet did the government of the whole action lie upon the officers. Conformable whereunto is our practice, so near as we can, upon the like occasion.

Lastly, for our direction in the public use of the censures, we propound to ourselves the rule of Christ, Matt. xviii. 17, touching sins private in themselves, but to be made public by the sinner's refusing to hear admonition: and with it, the practice thereof by the doctrine of his apostle, 1 Cor. v., about a sin of public nature. For the not censuring whereof he sharply reproveth the church; vehemently exhorting them, that being "come together in the name of the Lord Jesus," they would "by his power," for the use whereof he shows his judgment, for

Hosted by Google

his part severally, and promiseth his joint assent in their public assembly, excommunicate the offender. For neither could the apostle being but one, be the church, or congregation, which consists of two or three, that is a company, though never so small, gathered together in Christ's name, as he expounds himself, Matt. xviii. 20: neither did he seize into his own hands the liberty of the Corinthians, for their neglecting it; as oppressors use to deal with their tenants and debtors, taking the advantages of forfeitures against them: neither indeed could the apostle with any equity or justice proceed to any censure against the offender, he not being before sufficiently convinced of and rebuked for his sin, as he should have been. 1 Tim. v. 20.

Answerable to the course by Christ and the apostle there directed, and by the Corinthians observed, as appeareth, 2 Cor. ii. 6, we desire our practice may be. In which, sins scandalous, if in themselves of public nature, are brought to the church by one of the officers: or, if private, and to be made public by the sinner's impenitence, by the brother offended, and his witnesses, at the officer's appointment. Where the sin, being manifested, and for fact orderly proved against the offender, is by the elders condemned, and rebuked by the Word of God, and the sinner exhorted to repentance, according to the quality of the sin. In which conviction, and admonition lawfully, and sufficiently made, the church resteth: the men manifesting their assent thereunto by some convenient word, or sign, and the women by silence. And so the admonition which before was Christ's, and the officer's, becomes the church's: following the other as their governors, and not otherwise.

Upon which admonition if it please God to give the sinner repentance, 2 Tim. ii. 25, answerable, and that he so manifest, God thereby receiveth glory, who was dishonoured by his sin, and men who were offended, satisfaction: and so all further proceeding is stayed, and the person exhorted, and others by his example, to sin no more lest a worse thing happen unto him. But if he remain obstinate, and refuse to hear the church, and in it, Christ, admonishing him, then with sorrow for the hardness of his heart, all long sufferance, and patience in the meanwhile used, according to the nature and circum-

Hosted by Google

stances of the offence, by the power of the Lord Jesus, not given to the church in vain, the impenitent sinner is, for his humbling, to be cut off, and excommunicated from the fellowship of the church: the elders, as governors, going before in decreeing the sentence, and so one of them, upon the people's assent, as in admonition, pronouncing it in the name of Christ, and his church.

But, for that the officers are frail men, and those not "lords over God's heritage," as are princes, and magistrates over their subjects, but ministers and servants of Christ the husband, and the church the wife, whom the thing concerns in their places, as well as them, 1 Pet. v. 3; 1 Cor. iv. 1; 2 Cor. iv. 1, 5, we think it lawful for the brethren, either doubtful of anything in the officer's administration, to propound their doubt for satisfaction; or seeing them failing in any material thing, to admonish them of their duty and that they "look to their office," Col. iv. 17, or, if need stand, to supply the same for the further clearing of things. And this whole proceeding we make, and use ordinarily on the Lord's-day, as being properly the Lord's work, a work of religion, directly respecting the soul, and conscience: and of spiritual nature, as being an administration of Christ's kingdom, which is not of this world. John xviii. 36. And this also when the whole church is gathered together, as which it concerneth many ways. 1 Cor. iv. 4, 5. 1. Because the church which is offended by public sins, must be publicly satisfied. 2. A little leaven, leaveneth the whole lump, to wit of the church, being unpurged out. 3. They that sin must be rebuked openly, that the rest may fear. 1 Tim. v. 20. 4. The elders, or bishops are to feed the flock by government publicly, as well as by doctrine; and being by them, over whom they are, to be highly loved for their work's sake, their work of government must be seen by the church which is for the same so to esteem them. 1 Thess. v. 12, 13. And thus we believe, and practise accordingly, though, we confess, with great weakness. By which our weakness it cometh also to pass, that this comely order is sometimes interrupted, and human frailties intermingle themselves, either by the officer's fault, in not governing, or the people's in not obeying, as they ought:

Hosted by Google

so as we are at times overtaken with some things both disorderly, and difficult to determine; as it also cometh to pass in all societies, and governments of, and by men, whatsoever. And as in nature, the corruption of the best thing is the worst, so in the breach of the most comely order, there is the greatest both uncomeliness, and disorder. But things are not to be defined by their abuses, as the philosophers teach, and all wise men know: so neither must the Lord's ordinances be esteemed by the disorders personally incident unto them, but as they are in their right state, and lawful use.

The order of our government then being such, as I have described it, let every indifferent reader judge, whether or no, in respect of outward order, it be popular, and wherein the people govern, as many please to reproach us, and it. But if men will still shut their eyes against the things we plainly and simply lay down, and yet open their mouths against us for popularity, and Anabaptistry, we can but, making this and the like our just defences, commit both ourselves, and cause to God.

And thus much of our order of government. I will now go on where I left, to show that the Lord's people may not communicate with the Church of England in regard of the government ecclesiastical, and ministry thence derived.

And 1. The Scriptures teach us, that the Holy Ghost hath appointed sundry overseers, or bishops over one flock to feed, that is, to teach, and govern it: of which it also standeth in need. It is then the unholy ghost of Antichrist, which hath devised one bishop over many flocks, which he cannot possibly feed, if he would. Acts xx. 17, 20; xiv. 23; Phil. i. 1; 1 Tim. v. 17; Tit. i. 5. Only for his government he hath this help, that he is a lord over them, and not a minister, and servant unto them, and so bears more sway over the profane multitude, whereof those churches most-what consist, by lording it with his imperious canons, and purse-penalties, than many true bishops could do, by their faithful ministry, and service, according to Christ's testament.

2. It is written, Eph. iv. 8, 11—13, that Christ "when he ascended on high, gave gifts to men:" "some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some

Hosted by Google

pastors, and teachers, for the work of the ministry," &c. "until all the saints were met together unto a perfect man," &c. Where the apostle teacheth, how Christ the king of his church hath set in it certain orders of officers, answerably gifted, extraordinarily and ordinarily, and those also there to be, and continue in their time, till the same church and body of Christ were complete, both for number of persons, and measure of graces. Now if the bishops be pastors, or shepherds, and teachers, as some would make them, over their provinces, and dioceses, how will they answer the Lord for not teaching them? Or how hath the Lord appointed such a ministry, being an office of trust, and wherein the personal ability, and faithfulness of the minister is required, as which, he that received it, cannot possibly fulfil if he would? Col. iv. 17. Or if the bishops be of the order of pastors, and teachers, which are the lowest ministers, of what order are the parishional ministers, which are below them? And for the first three, apostles, prophets, and evangelists, they were extraordinary, for the first planting, and watering of the churches. The apostles, and prophets laying the foundation, by doctrine infallibly true: and the evangelists employed by the apostles' direction, here and there, for the perfecting of their work, as there was need. Neither were they, one or other, tied to any particular flock, diocese, province, or nation; but were general men, and for all places; being thereunto furnished with the knowledge, and use of all tongues, as there was occasion. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; 1 Cor. iii. 6, 10, 11; Eph. ii. 20; Acts xvi. 1—3; Rom. xvi. 21; 1 Cor. xvi. 10; 2 Cor. viii. 6, 16, 23, and xi. 28; 2 Tim. iv. 5, 21; Tit. i. 5, and iii. 12. So that whilst our English bishops plead their provincial, and diocesan jurisdiction from the commission of the apostles and evangelists, they are found to be of their number, who said they were apostles, and were not. Rev. ii. 2. They then, in their order of ministry, are not of the gifts, which Christ, the king of his church gave, when he ascended on high, but of the gifts of Antichrist in his ascent to the throne of his apostacy: of whose body also they are natural members, without which it cannot consist: as may all other bodies, whether civil or ecclesiastical. And since the officers of

Hosted by Google

the church are members of the body, 1 Cor. xii. 12, 27, 28, of Christ, as the eyes, mouth, hand, &c., he who adds to, or takes from the church an order of ministry or office, presumes to add to, or take from Christ's body, a member: and so abolishing a member of the body, he doth also abolish a gift, and grace of the Spirit, working effectually according to the measure, or proportion of every part; or adding a member, he must be able to quicken, and furnish it with a proportionable gift of that same Spirit, who distributeth to every member, as it pleaseth, ver. 11. And so where the apostle saith, ver. 4, 5, "that there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit: and diversities of ministries, but the same Lord:" he plainly teacheth these two things. 1. That all lawful ministries in the church are of Christ: 2. That none may appoint a ministry in the church but he who can bestow an answerable gift of qualification: which is not in the power of any man, or angel.

3. The Lord by his apostle hath ordered, that the elders, or bishops which labour in the word, and doctrine, should have double honour, specially, and above them that rule, though well: and that upon a ground of perpetual equity, that since the bishop's, or elder's office is a work, the chief work, which preaching is, should have the chief honour. 1 Tim. v. 17; iii. 1. But this order of Christ, and of nature itself, is clean subverted by the order of the prelacy, and ministry in England, where tenfold honour is given to ruling, though not well, above the most painful labouring in the word, and doctrine. It well suits with the spirit of Antichrist, that imperious lording over the souls and consciences of men should be advanced above the base, and burdensome work of preaching God's Word.

Lastly, the rights, and liberties wherewith Christ the Lord hath in his Word endowed his church, the elders for their government, and the people for their liberty, for the calling of officers, and censuring of offenders these oppressors spiritual have seized into their own hands, as their peculiars, Matt. xviii. 17; 1 Cor. v.; Acts i. and vi.: in, and upon which their usurpation, which is specially to be noted, their very office, and order is founded. "Woe be to him," saith the Lord, "that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong," Jer. xxii. 13:

Hosted by Google

how much more then unto them, who build their high palaces by such spiritual injury against the Lord, his house, ministers, and people as they apparently do.

For conclusion; the tree is known by the fruits: and too evident it is by their fruits, upon what root the prelates' tree groweth. Their preferring, and that, in their most solemn constitutions, the wearing of a surplice, or making a cross in a babe's forehead by the minister, before the preaching of the gospel; of bowing the knee by the people to, or at the Lord's Supper, before the most worthy receiving otherwise; the reading, and hearing of their, rather than God's, service, by the one and other, above the performance of any part of God's worship appointed in his Word, by either of them, do declare them to be no mean members of that "man of sin, and adversary, who exalteth himself above all that is called God." 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4.

Their constraining the ministers to receive from them, and by their sole authority, their order of priesthood, and institutions to their cures, with their licences to preach: enforcing them to subscribe, and that from their hearts, to their devised government, service, and ceremonies, and even to swear canonical obedience to them therein; and both them, and the people to obey their summons, and citations, running, and riding to and fro, to sue and serve in their courts: to take the oath *ex officio*, to accuse themselves, and their friends, and that often for well-doing: to submit to their censures of all sorts, and not so much as to dare to speak against their tyrannies and superstitions, under pain of excommunication, *ipso facto* do proclaim unto all men that have ears to hear, that they are in a great measure, spiritual Babylonish lords, "causing all both small and great, rich and poor, to receive their mark in their right hand, or forehead, and otherwise not suffering them either to buy, or sell." Rev. xiii. 16, 17.

Their sale of orders and institutions, and that mostwhat unto persons utterly unworthy, to the destruction of how many thousand souls for whom Christ died, either by starving them through ignorance, or poisoning them by profane example; of dispensations for pluralities, and nonresidences, of licences to preach up and down the country, and to marry at times by their canons prohibited: of par-

Hosted by Google

dons, and absolutions, when men are excommunicated, and sometimes when they are dead, before they can have Christian burial: with their extorted fees, and purse-penalties, the very sinews of their kingdom, do clearly pronounce against them, that they and their subordinates are "merchants of that great city Babylon, trafficking for all manner of ware, and for the souls of men." Rev. xviii. 10—13.

Now touching the parochial ministers, I have proved against Mr. Bernard,* that neither their office, nor calling by which they administer it, is of Christ. The office of the bishop is a work, 1 Tim. iii. 1; and this work stands in feeding the flock, Acts xx. 28; and this feeding in preaching and ruling. Now, as the government of their flocks is not so much as permitted unto them, so neither is preaching any natural or necessary part of their office, but an accessory and casual ornament, and which may be or may not be, as the persons can or will. And for their calling, whether to their priesthood at large, by the archdeacon's presentation and bishop's ordination; or to their special charges, either by the patron's presentation, bishop's institution and archdeacon's induction, or by the bishop's sole licence; the very naming of the means by which it is had, sufficiently proves it not to be from heaven, but of man, even the man of sin, his vain device. Luke xx. 4. But I will for the present insist only upon this consideration, that the parishional ministry is a branch of the prelacy; and so all communion with the one, as other, is to be avoided by God's people.

And for the better discerning of things, it must be observed, that as the whole nation is divided into two provinces, under the two archbishops, and the two provinces into sundry dioceses under the bishops, and they into their several parishes under the ministers thereof; so do the archbishops and bishops share out unto the parish priests, in their ordination, a part of their charge, to wit, so much as concerns the ordinary service of the parish; as they do also unto their chancellors, commissaries, and archdeacons, another part for inferior government; reserving unto themselves the lordship over both, for the best advantage

* A Justification, &c., vol. ii., pp. 370, &c.

Hosted by Google

of their own honour and profit. So that the chancellor in the consistory, and the priest in the pulpit or desk, doth administer by one and the same power: namely, that of the prelate, which from and by him, both the one and the other doth receive. And, as Christ told the twelve when he sent them to preach, that "he who received them, received him; and that he who received him, received him that sent him," Matt. x. 40; so he that receives or communicates with the minister, in any parish of the land, receives the bishop that sent him, and so indeed, originally, the Pope that sent him; and of whose sending the Pope is, they and we make no question. The prelacy, then, being to be rooted out, as a plant which God hath not planted, and the ministry, in the order and office of which we speak, being a branch of it, can the branch survive, if the root be plucked up? or, shall any of God's people, by their maintenance of it, submission unto it, or communion with it, give thereunto any life or preservation?

But here sundry defences are made, by them who in judgment, word, and writing, and some practices, dislike the prelacy: as that "they are not subject to their government; that the ministers do not stand by the ordination and power received from and by them, but by the people's acceptation; that these things are but matters of outward order and government, which, though they may something concern the ministers themselves, yet are they little or nothing to private persons."

We will briefly consider of these defences: and let them who make them consider and beware, that they be not of them, who will not be reformed, but seek excuses after their own heart.

And, first, They who thus disclaim, in word, the bishop's government, confess themselves, therein, to be under no spiritual external government at all; and so be lawless persons, and inordinate walkers, and such as have neither that conscience which is meet, of the commandments of Christ by his apostles, to give due honour to them who rule well, and to "submit themselves to those who are over them in the Lord," 1 Tim. v. 17; Heb. xiii. 17; nor of their own frailty, and in what need they stand of the

Hosted by Google

Lord's ordinances, and of this in special, for their guidance and conservation in his ways. Secondly, The daily practice of these men, every one of them less or more, in the sight of the sun, is a sufficient conviction of their unhonest excuse. Their obedience unto the summons and citations, unto their spiritual courts of the prelates and their deputies; their suing or appearing there by themselves or their proctors; the submission of the ministers to their suspensions and deprivations; and both of ministers and people to their excommunications, do really plead their spiritual subjection to their jurisdiction. Yea, so far are the people from freeing the ministers by their acceptation from the prelates' jurisdiction, as on the contrary, they enthral them much more under the same; not only by accepting them at the first under their mark of institution, or licence, but even ever after, year by year, by choosing a churchwarden, or sides-man as they call him, to present both their own and minister's defaults in and unto their consistories and visitations: as doth the minister also choose another for the same purpose; for the performance of which presentations they are to bind themselves by oath, and so ordinarily do. So that, howsoever many are ashamed of their lords and masters, both ministers and people, not actually separated from their parish assemblies, stand in spiritual subjection to the prelates, and receive their mark, though some in their forehead and more professedly; and others as effectually, though more covertly, in their right hand.

Now for the outward government, and ordering of the house of God, the church, and the outward calling of the ministers thereof, they are not so slighty matters, as politic men, out of their fleshly hearts would persuade themselves and others. The apostle unto Timothy, treating at large of these things tells him, how the cause why he so writes is, that in his absence, he "might know how he ought to behave himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar, and ground of truth." Where he adorneth the church with most honourable titles, for this very end, that he, and all other God's ministers, and people, might be admonished more carefully to preserve unviolated that sacred economy, and church government

Hosted by Google

there prescribed: obtesting, and charging him before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, to observe these things impartially, 1 Tim. iii. 15, 16, 21: as also writing unto the Corinthians he propounds the matter of outward order unto them, as "the commandments of the Lord Jesus," 1 Cor. xiv. 37, which are all to be observed by his disciples in their places, Matt. xxviii. 20: in whose eyes he is worthy of more honour in his own house, and in the ordering of it, than was Moses a servant in his Master's house, Heb. iii. 3, &c.: according to whose direction, notwithstanding, all things were to be ordered. I add, that the same apostle, whatsoever other men despising, it seems, his simplicity, think or say, testifieth of the Colossians, that they had received Christ, as well in their order, as faith: and rejoiceth as well in their continuance in the one, as other, Col. ii. 5, 6: as on the contrary he sharply reproveth the Corinthians, for the breach of order, and neglect of discipline, as well as for any other evil. 1 Cor. v. 14. And see how unequal these men are. The Pope's arrogating to himself to be the universal bishop, is in itself but a matter of order and government: and yet they generally, who are soundly minded, deem him properly Antichrist therein: alleging that of Gregory against John of Constantinople, for that purpose. And if the universal bishop make Antichrist in the head, surely the bishops of dioceses, and archbishops of provinces, and metropolitans of nations, may well challenge the parts of arms, and shoulders of that body.

Now touching the minister's outward calling, of such force it is, that he is by it alone, if at all, properly, and immediately, a true church officer; as is the magistrate in the commonwealth, the captain in the army, the steward in the family, by the outward calling of those in whom that right is, a true and lawful magistrate, captain, or steward: and without which, all, and every of them, are mere usurpers, howsoever qualified in their persons, and serviceable in their administrations. "No man," saith the apostle, "takes unto himself this honour, but he, that is called of God, as Aaron." Heb. v. 4. And let them who think it a small matter to usurp, or being usurped, to communicate with, a calling without order by God's Word, consider what befel

Hosted by Google

them, who usurped, or communicated in the usurpation of, the priestly honour, not being thereunto called, as was Aaron. Numb. xi. 16. And how it lieth on all the ministers of Christ in hand, to be able to justify their outward calling to their offices, the apostle teacheth by his own example, and, specially, in his Epistle to the church of Galatia, where it was most called in question, Gal. i. 1: which they also that cannot do, are to be served, as were they, who could not find the writing of their genealogy, and were therefore put from the priesthood. Neh. vii. 64.

And, as they know who have experience thereof, what comfort it ministereth against the manifold trials incident to the lawful ministers of Christ, that they are called by them thereunto, whom, under the Lord, it most concerneth, as over whose souls they are to watch: so on the contrary, I verily suppose, it cometh to pass, that even the best ministers in the assemblies, do so easily, and unworthily forsake their flocks, for their greater ease, profit, or credit; and which not, for fear of a little persecution? because they want this testimony, and comfort of good conscience, that they have been lawfully called to minister unto them.

To conclude then this point also: the same scriptures and grounds which prove the order of prelacy, and so of priesthood, being a branch of it, not to be of God, do also prove it unlawful for the people of God to partake in the administrations of the one, or other, and therein to submit themselves unto them.

For 1. Their very administrations, by an unlawful calling, are their sins: and so to partake with them in their administrations, is to partake with them in their sins, contrary to 1 Tim. v. 22; Rev. xv. 4.

2dly. The ground of submission unto the officers of the church is, that they are made "overseers of the flock by the Holy Ghost," and are "over it in the Lord," Acts xx. 17, 28; 1 Thess. v. 12: which subjection therefore neither the prelates, nor priests being appointed by their ghosts, can challenge, neither can the people by faith yield the same unto them. The apostle, Rom. xiii., urging submission to all sorts of magistrates doth it upon this ground, that they are of God, and his ordinances: so the ground of our submission to any office of ministry in the church, and

Hosted by Google

stay of our faith, is this, that it is of Christ the Mediator of his church, and one of his ordinances.

3dly. In the second commandment of the first table are commanded all external spiritual ordinances, and so the external spiritual ministry, and government of the church: neither can the same be referred to any other of the ten commandments: whereupon I infer. that every such government, and ministry not commanded by God, and Christ, is as an idol, there forbidden, and all subjection unto it, as the bowing down unto an idol.

Fourthly, They who judge the prelacy not to be of Christ, but of Antichrist, and so speak, and write (to whom more principally I direct my speech), and yet stand members of the parish assemblies under the government, and ministry thereof, do really, and indeed underprop, and uphold that, which in word, and writing they would overthrow: they would blow or dash it down with their mouths, and pens, and yet uphold it with their shoulders. Far are they from giving unto Christ his due honour in his officers and orders, whilst they thus submit unto the officers and orders of his adversary Antichrist, as is that whole hierarchy and every order in it, from the pope unto the sumner. If any traitor, or rebel should now rise up, and strive with the king for any, the dignities or prerogatives royal of the kingdom, and should so far prevail with any able men, as that they should be content to take upon them, by his commission and sending, to administer justice publicly, were it lawful for any the king's subjects to join with, or submit unto them in their ministrations, though in themselves never so just? or were they not all, under pain of disloyalty, bound to abandon them, and their courts, or assemblies, and to adjoin, and submit themselves unto the king's lawful officers, how few, or feeble soever? Even so, must all the loyal subjects of Jesus Christ the king of his church, withdraw themselves wholly from the powers of Antichrist, striving with Christ whether shall rule by his officers, orders, and laws: whatsoever truths they teach or administer: and must adjoin themselves to the officers of Christ, lawfully called, and sent to teach, and guide his church by his Word: and therein must show, as in other things, their loyalty to their lord and king.

Hosted by Google

But here M. de Lescluse's forenamed opposites step in, and plead for submission unto unlawful ministers, 1. That "in Christ's time there were divers officers whose names had not been heard of in the primitive church of the Jews, nor ever were instituted by any example of former times, in that church, as the names of lawyers, scribes of the people, and rulers of the synagogues, or archi-synagogues. 2. If the godly may lawfully submit unto the government, and guidance by private admonition of such private brethren, who for their sects, factions, and superstitious observations have had such names as were formerly unknown unto the church of God; who also in respect of their wickedness deserved to be cast out of the church, and are unjustly retained, as it was in the communion of the godly with the scribes and pharisees, then is it also lawful to stand under the guidance and government of unlawful officers." *

In whose defence I observe, first, that they yield the ministers of England to be unlawful, and to have had their names of primates, metropolitans, lord archbishops, lord bishops, deans, archdeacons, chancellors, commissaries, priests, parsons, vicars, curates, given unto them for their sects, factions, and superstitious observations: and yet all of them make suit, take, pay for, and answer to some or other of these names, with the orders to which they appertain. Secondly, I note how vain a pretext it is, that the persons, whose names are prefixed, are the authors of the book, as if John Fowler, and his fellows durst take upon them to set down what names of officers had been heard of, or not, in the Jewish church from the first institution, till Christ's time. Thirdly, where in their former reason they make the scribes of the people church-officers, in the second reason they make the scribes and pharisees, private brethren. Fourthly, they grant one private brother to be under the guidance, and government of another, and so establish a popular government, in a sense expressly; and by just consequence, as far as we intend and do, howsoever they reproach us for popularity. Now for their arguments. First, I deny that, which they take for granted, and upon which they build, to wit, that the names of law-

* A Shield of Defence, &c., pp. 24, 25.

Hosted by Google

yers, scribes of the people, and rulers of the synagogues, were not in the Jewish church, before Christ's time.

And 1. The lawyers were such as were skilful in the Law of God, and the scribes such as gave themselves either to expound, or write it, or both: being also Levites for the most part, in which respects these their names, as honourable, and not for their factions, were most fitly given them: and not first in Christ's time, as is affirmed, but long before, as appeareth, Jer. viii. 8, and Ezra vii. 6, 11, 12, where Ezra is called a scribe prompt in the law of Moses; which Tremelius and Junius translate * a lawyer, or one skilful in the law: as indeed these scribes and lawyers were the same, as is testified, Matt. xxii. 35, compared with Mark xii. 28, and so the Hebrew word † may indifferently be turned and is. And if there were nothing else, that which we read, 1 Maccab. v. 42 reproves these men's peremptory affirmation, that the names of the scribes of the people were not in the church of the Jews, before Christ's time. But both better, and more ancient testimony may be brought against it: take that one, amongst many, in the Greek Bible, Numb. xi. 16, where the seventy interpreters have it, *πρεσβύτεροι τοῦ λαοῦ καὶ γραμματεῖς αὐτῶν.* So for the names of archi-synagogues, or rulers of the synagogues spoken of, Mark v. 22, &c., the same interpreters use the same words, Exod. xxxiv. 31; Numb. xxxi. 13, &c., which the evangelists do writing in Greek, and herein without doubt, following them, as in other things. And there being synagogues of old among the Jews, there must needs be rulers of them and the same so called.

Touching the second argument: I deny the proportion upon which they build it. In receiving an admonition from an unlawful brother, as they speak, I do submit only to that which is good in itself, and of God: but in submitting to an unlawful officer, prelate, or priest, I submit to that which is evil in itself and not of God, to wit, his very office, or order. The unlawful brother, though in sin, yet doth not perform the admonition by virtue of his sin, but out of his personal knowledge, and zeal, at least in appearance, against the sin he reproves in particular, but the

* Legis peritus. † סוֹפֵר, Sopher.

Hosted by Google

unlawful officer doth administer the public doctrine, (as the sacraments) by virtue, or rather by vice, of his very sin immediately, and properly: wherein I may not partake with him. These men have refused to submit to Mr. Johnson's public ministry, and so profess: do they, therefore, think it unlawful to receive any information, or admonition, or reproof by the Word of God for their sins, from him, or any the people with him privately, and upon occasion? And, by their large grounds, it should be lawful to submit to the ministry of any heretical minister: for from such a one it is not unlawful to receive a private admonition for sin, upon occasion. But how much better were it for these men, and their friends to advance by all good means a lawful ministry, than thus to support that which is unlawful, by pleading for submission unto it. But if they needs will, as they plead in their book, submit their souls to thieves, and robbers, and to such ministers, as were the scribes, and pharisees in Christ's time, in whom they instance, notorious heretics denying both the nature, offices, and person of the Messiah, teaching justification by the works of the law, and power in man to keep it, let them rejoice in their ministers, and let their ministers also rejoice in them, as Jotham said of the men of Schechem and Abimelech: but for us, we have learnt to give more honour to God's ordinance, and to have more care of Christ's precious purchase, our souls, than to commit the same to such watchmen's keeping.

Thus have I briefly noted down, and confirmed the principal grounds of our separation from the communion, and order of the church assemblies, notwithstanding the admission of the personal communion before mentioned. And I have of purpose taken in, and answered the chief reasons brought by M. de Lescluse's accusers, against our practice, that it may appear, both, how they fail of that they promise in the Preface of their book; as, also, that it is a far more easy thing to reproach men's persons, than justly to evince their profession. And would the king but give toleration, and withhold from bodily violence against their persons and estates, I doubt not, but we should have many thousands in the land concurring with us for substance of practice, as they do now in opinion:

Hosted by Google

who would speedily unite themselves in other spiritual societies, than the profane parishes: leaving the service-book, and ceremonies to the prelates, with their dumb priests, and formal clergy: withdrawing from their and their chancellor's, and official's spiritual jurisdiction, neither obeying their summons, nor regarding their censures: neither would the ministers sue to them for their orders and licences; nor the people receive them of their making, nor present them by their church-wardens to their courts, nor keep them by their leave, and under their correction: but both ministers, and people would find other, and better rules of direction in Christ's testament, for their walking, and worshipping of God, than the bishop's canons and injunctions. Which so being, he, who indeed "judgeth his people with justice, and his poor afflicted ones with judgment," be judge between them and us, Psa. lxxii. 2: and whether, we, submitting ourselves so near as we can discern to all the commandments and ordinances of Christ in his gospel, reject them; or they, us, who rather choose the unhallowed church-state, order, and ordinances in and under which they stand, than that, and those, by themselves, esteemed more agreeable to the will of God, with persecution: but specially whether we, for these things, do deserve that cruel hatred, and those most hostile carriages, which many of them, who would be thought to mourn for reformation, do bear, and use towards us: making it their glory to cast shame upon us, and their great matter of rejoicing to add to our afflictions, and who say to our souls in the day of our sorrow, "Bow down, that we may go over." Isa. li. 23.

There is yet another danger, into which men may easily fall by occasion of the former doctrine: which is, in taking liberty to withhold, or withdraw from the church of God, and ministry thereof: satisfying themselves in that, their private fellowship, with the better sort of people: with whom, by this means, they may converse with more comfort to themselves, and contentment to them. For the preventing of which evil, I will here annex a few reasons to enforce the necessity, and conscience of living, and walking with the church of God, and so under the ministry thereunto given, if it can be had.

Hosted by Google

And, 1. The Scriptures calling the church "the house," "temple," and "tabernacle of the living God," where he hath promised that most full presence of his grace, and "to dwell with," and "amongst men," and "in the midst of them, as their God," do, therein, effectually admonish the people of God to beware, that by their own default, they do not any way deprive themselves of the fruit of this, God's so gracious promise and presence, in the true visible church, his house, and temple, 1 Tim. iii. 15; 2 Cor. vi. 16; Rev. xxi. 3; Matt. xviii. 20; 1 Cor. v. 4: either by not adjoining themselves thereunto, as members: or being members, by withdrawing from her actual communion: therein making themselves, to speak as the truth is, but idol members, and as "eyes which see not, ears which hear not, and feet which walk not," at least, in respect of the body, whereof they are.

2. And if we look to the most worthy servants of God, for our examples, we shall find them always to have had a most ardent desire unto, and vehement delight in this visible presence of God in his church and ordinances: the necessary use and sweet fruit whereof they so sensibly found in their own experience. Take we David for an instance: whose love was such, to the mansion of God's house, and place of the habitation of his glory, as that it was the only thing he desired, in comparison, that he might dwell in the Lord's house all the days of his life, and there behold his glory, Psa. xxvii. 4; xxvi. 8: professing in his absence from it, that the thirsty hind did not more bray after the rivers of waters, than did his soul for God's presence, and that he might appear before his face in his tabernacle, Psa. xlii. 1, 2: deeming them most happy, who did always abide in God's house; and himself in that his sequestration more miserable than the sparrows and swallows, which could nestle, and lay their young near God's altars. Psa. lxxxiv. 1, 2, &c. And yet, was he a most excellent prophet himself, and so could abundantly instruct both himself, and them with him. It is likewise testified of Moses the servant of God, that he "rather chose to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season: esteeming the rebuke of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt." Heb. xi. 25, 26. A plain, and loud testimony

Hosted by Google

against them, who, because they would not bear their part in the rebuke of Christ, and afflictions of his people, do rather withdraw or withhold themselves from Christ's church, and ordinances; or, which is worse, defile themselves with the pleasures of sin in Egypt spiritual: of whom without their repentance, Christ Jesus will be ashamed, before his Father, and the holy angels. Luke ix. 26.

3. That which the wise man speaketh more generally, "Woe be to him that is alone, for he falleth, and there is not a second to lift him up; but if two be together, the other lifteth up his fellow when he falleth," Eccl. iv. 9, 10, &c., is of special use this way. And, considering how subject even the strongest are to fall, by occasion, it is most necessary, all so walk in the communion of saints, as that others, upon such occasion, may by the hand of their godly admonitions and exhortations reached out unto them, again restore them, 1 Cor. x. 12; or, if need so require, that they may have use of the stronger hand of the church and ministry, strengthened with Christ's power, for their recovery; through the want whereof, how many fall and perish, which by it, and the blessing of God thereupon, might be restored, as we doubt not but we may truly affirm from experience! And if any man think himself to have received that strength of grace, that he stands in no great need of these helps, "let him that thinks he stands, take heed lest he fall:" and let him also in love consider, that the less need he hath of the church, by reason of his greater measure of grace, the more need the church hath of him and it, unto which and whose service, they of due belong.

4. "When the Lord Jesus ascended on high, he gave gifts unto men," to wit, his ministers gifted accordingly, for the edification of the body and help of the joy of the faithful, and furtherance of their salvation; unto whom they are bound, therefore, to submit, and them, in the Lord, to obey, for their own great good. Eph. iv. 8—11; 2 Cor. i. 24; 1 Tim. iv. 6; Heb. xiii. 17. From whom, and whose ministrations, whilst men without just and necessary cause, withdraw themselves, they break Christ's commandment, lose this fruit of his ascension, and fail in their own edification and salvation many ways.

Hosted by Google

5. This duty yet lieth more specially upon them that have families and children about them; whom they shall hardly govern at home in private, as they desire, if they have not public encouragement and help from abroad, but they shall have them still in danger to be corrupted with the superstitions of the times, or with greater evils, or both. Which dangers yet will be the greater, and that of the first kind almost inevitable, if the parents die, whilst their children are young and unestablished in the truth; whereas living with the church, they might much more easily dispose of them for their education and establishment in the ways and ordinances of the Lord; into the fellowship whereof, together with themselves, they are taken. Gen. xvii. 7, 10.

6. Lastly. It is a great offence to all, who have known men, formerly zealous hearers of God's Word in the parish assemblies, to see them hear the same in no assemblies, or where no public ministry is in use; and this, more especially, to the better sort of people, who will run and ride to hear a sermon, if they want at home, though they go but a borrowing of him who hath indeed no right himself so to dispense it publicly, or any other holy thing of God as he doth.

But it will here be objected, that "the church's ministry and ordinances are indeed to be desired, if men could enjoy them in their own country, and amongst their friends; otherwise, it seems better to witness the truth and suffer persecution at home, though without them, than for the use of them to flee into a strange country."

It must here be known, that the truth of the Lord is witnessed two ways: first, when men walk in the obedience of it, and of all the ordinances thereof, roundly and holily, Deut. xxviii. 1; Matt. vi. 10; xxviii. 20; Psa. cxix. 4, 6; and, secondly, when men, being called thereunto, suffer persecution for the same. And of these two, the former is the more necessary, as being commanded of God, and by men to be desired and prayed for; the latter not so. For neither doth God command persecution, neither are we to desire it, or to pray for it, but to avoid it by all good means; and, being laid upon us by the Lord, with patience to bear it. Yet they that desire to please God, and to walk

Hosted by Google

roundly in his appointments, shall not want persecution of sundry kinds; neither if the world thought we did, would so many withhold or withdraw from us, as do some under one, and some under another pretext, besides those who are persuaded indeed of the unlawfulness of flight.

Now touching our country, and friends, our answer is, that we deem the want of them a grievous loss, which we would also redeem at a great rate. Yet for our country, we do not forsake it, but are by it forsaken and expelled by most extreme laws, and violent proscriptions, contrived and executed by the prelates, and on their behalf. And for private friends thus we judge, that the wife is no way to leave her husband, but to give him, as the head, the honour, of choosing probably, the place of their cohabitation: nor children and servants, their parents and masters to their prejudice, without their consent, or an apparent impossibility of doing them service: nor at all, where through their absence, they shall want necessary help and comfort. But for those, who are either the governors of others, or free, we think they may use greater liberty.

CHAPTER III.

OF FLIGHT IN PERSECUTION.

And here, being thereunto forced by the unreasonable provocation of Mr. Thomas Helwisse,* who in great con-

* The Rev. Thos. Hellwisse was one of the Puritan party, and subsequently joined himself to the Separatists. He advised exile for the sake of enjoying liberty of conscience and of worship, and accompanied a number of the persecuted brotherhood to Amsterdam. He joined Mr. Smyth's Church in that city. Mr. Hellwisse's views on baptism were changed at the time of Mr. Smyth's; he therefore renounced his connexion with the Independent Church, and united himself with Mr. Smyth in forming a Baptist Church. On the death of Mr. Smyth, in 1609, the church chose Mr. Hellwisse as their pastor. He did not continue long in the pastorate amongst them. Believing that he had committed an error in fleeing from England on account of persecution, he, with many of his flock, returned to his native land, and published, in defence of himself and his companions in tribulation, a small treatise, entitled, "A Short Declaration of the Mystery of Iniquity," 16mo., pp. 212, 1612. To this work, the

Hosted by Google

fidence, and passion, layeth load of reproaches both upon our flight in persecution, and also upon our persons for it, I will (God assisting me) by the Scriptures, approve the same, as lawful, and so answer what he hath written to the contrary.

For which purpose we will consider, for our instruction, what the practice hath been of the holy patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, with other godly men in their times, in cases of danger for well-doing, and what approbation therein they have had from the Lord.

We will begin with the patriarch, Jacob, whose two notable flights, for fear of danger, the Scriptures mention: the former from his profane brother Esau, the other from his churlish uncle Laban. Gen. xxvi. 42, 43; xxxi. 20. Touching whose flights these three things are more specially to be observed: 1. That he fled from one country to another. 2. That in his very flight, the Lord did abundantly communicate himself with him, comforting and blessing him. 3. That it was he which thus fled, who had power and strength, to wrestle with God, and by wrestling to prevail.

Next unto him is Moses the servant of the Lord, who

present and following sections of Mr. Robinson's treatise are designed as a reply. Before his return to England, he is supposed to have written "A Declaration of the Faith of the English people remaining at Amsterdam,"—to which Mr. Robinson replies, also, in the last section of this volume,—also two small treatises, entitled respectively, "A Proof that God's Decree is not the Cause of any Man's Condemnation, and that all Men are redeemed by Christ, and that no Infants are condemned," 12mo., pp. 111; and, "An Advertisement, or Admonition, unto the Congregation which Men call New Fryelers, in the Low Countries, &c." 16mo., pp. 94. On his return to England, he settled in London, and founded, it is supposed, the first general Baptist Church in this country. Nothing is known of his history after the year 1612, beyond the fact of his labouring zealously in his Master's cause, and of his suffering greatly "for righteousness' sake," till 1620, when he was released from his labours and trials by the hand of death. Vide Crosby's History of the Baptists, vol. i., pp. 269—276; Brook's Lives of the Puritans, vol. ii., pp. 279—282; Ivimey's History of the English Baptists, &c., for the years 1610—1700, vol. ii., p. 505; Hanbury's Historical Memorials, vol. i., pp. 256, 267, 276, 293, 418; Hanserd Knollys Society's Tracts on Liberty of Conscience, and Persecution, 1614—1661; republished in 1846.

Hosted by Google

having entered upon the execution of his office in killing the Egyptian, and perceiving that the thing was known, fled out of Egypt, for fear of Pharaoh into Midian, another country also, and there dwelt, and took him a wife: during whose time of exile, and abode there, the Lord also did marvellously communicate himself with him, and called him to the greatest dignity in the earth: which was to be the deliverer, and guide of his peculiar people. Acts vii 25; Exod. ii. 12, 14, 15; iii. 4, 18.

Descend we next unto David, whose flights, though he wanted no true courage, how many were they, and those also from the tabernacle, the only place of God's special presence, by reason of Saul's persecution, not only in his own country, where he was driven to hide himself in wildernesses, and caves, and desert mountains, but even into strange, and profane countries, as to Gath of the Philistines, and to Mizpeh in Moab, 1 Sam. xix. 12; xxi. 1. 10; xxii. 1, 3: all whose wanderings God did count, putting his tears in his bottle, Psa. lvi. 8: and directing him graciously in his flights, and that of times, even for such meditations, as are left for the instruction, and comfort of God's people in their flights, and other trials, to the world's end.

We do also read of Jeremiah and Baruch, their hiding themselves from danger, Jer. xxxvi. 19: and of Elijah the prophet's hiding himself by the Lord's appointment from Ahab's cruelty: and how the Lord did extraordinarily furnish him for his further flight in the wilderness, by the ministry of his angel. 1 Kings xvii. 3; xviii. 10; xix. 3, 5.

Yea, we have even Christ our Lord himself, when Herod thought to kill him, in his infancy, carried into Egypt by Joseph, with Mary his mother, whither they fled to keep the babe from being destroyed, and there abode, till the danger was over, Matt. ii. 13—15: and therein, as our head, sanctifying flight in his mother's arms, to all his members in their time, who are partakers of the fellowship of his afflictions, and of this amongst the rest. Phil. iii. 10. Which liberty he did also sundry times in his riper years use himself, and so ratify unto us, by avoiding the places of danger, where his enemies were, who sought to destroy him: and thereby escaping out of their hands, till his hour were come, unto him certainly, and infallibly

Hosted by Google

known: directing his disciples also, that when they were persecuted in one city they should fly unto another: and to beware of men, and to look to themselves. Mark. iii. 6, 7; Luke iv. 29, 30; John iv. 1, 3, vii. 1, x. 39; Matt. x. 23. Which liberty they also used time after time, as appears in many particulars: as first, in all the church at Jerusalem, scattered abroad, and dispersed, save the apostles, by means of persecution: with whom the Lord also was, blessing them wheresover they came. So, in Peter being freed from Herod's tyranny, getting him to another place. Likewise in Paul and Barnabas flying from Iconium to avoid violence, unto Lystra, as Paul had done before from Damascus; where to avoid the lying in wait of the Jews he was let down by night through the wall of the city, by a rope in a basket. In which his base flight he doth also rejoice afterwards, as being one of his infirmities or sufferings for Christ. Acts viii. 1, xi. 19—21, xii. 3, 4, 17, xiv. 1, 5, 6; ix. 23—25; 2 Cor. xi. 30.

Add we in the last place, that which is written of the servants of God elsewhere, that they of whom the world was not worthy, did by faith wander up and down, in sheepskins, and goatskins, and that in wildernesses, and mountains, and dens, and caves of the earth. Heb. xi. 37—39.

And for not only flight, but even banishment also, we have John the servant of Christ in the isle called Patmos for the word of God, and for the witnessing of Jesus Christ, Rev. i. 9: that is, banished, and confined to that isle, by the Roman emperor, with which also that in Isaiah, xvi. 4, consorteth, where the Lord requires of Moab, to let his banished dwell with her. Considering then, how plainly, and expressly the Scriptures speak in the point, it is marvel, that any, making them their direction, should abridge either themselves, or others ordinarily of the liberty of flight in persecution. But we will come to Mr. Helwisse's oppositions against it.

And as he hath a better faculty in reviling men's persons, than in refuting their judgments, so begins he his plea with a bitter accusation against false-hearted leaders, who, as he saith, to be sure not to lose their lives for Christ, flee into strange countries, and free states, and draw people after

Hosted by Google

them, to support their kingdom, &c.; seeking the kingdom of heaven, as far they may with their safety. Page 205.

If we principally sought our earthly good, or safety, why did we not abide at home, or why return we not thither, applying ourselves to the times, as so many thousands do? that I may not allege, that by seeking such a kingdom of heaven, or church, as out of which we should throw our children, as he hath done, which we might do safely enough, if without sin, we could procure to ourselves much more earthly help and furtherance, in the country where we live, as he knew well. And for drawing over the people, I know none of the guides, but were as much drawn over by them, as drawing them. The truth is, it was Mr. Helwisse, who above all, either guides or others, furthered this passage into strange countries: and if any brought oars, he brought sails, as I could show in many particulars, and as all that were acquainted with the manner of our coming over, can witness with me. Neither is it likely, if he, and the people with him at Amsterdam, could have gone on comfortably, as they desired, that the unlawfulness of flight would ever have troubled him: but more than likely it is that, having scattered the people, by his heady and indiscreet courses, and otherwise disabled himself, that natural confidence, which abounded in him, took occasion, under an appearance of spiritual courage, to press him upon those desperate courses, which he, of late, hath run. By which he might also think it his glory, to dare and challenge king, and state to their faces, and not to give way to them, no not a foot: as indeed it far better agrees with a bold spirit, and haughty stomach, thus to do, than with the apostle in the base infirmity of Christ to be let down through a wall in a basket, and to run away.

But we will weigh his reason against our flight. And first, he accuseth us, page 205, that, for justifying of it we pervert Christ's saying, Matt. x. 23, which is, "When they persecute you in one city, flee into another:" and that Christ there bids his disciples, when they are persecuted in one city, go to another, to preach the gospel: because they should not go over all the cities of Israel, till the Son of man come.

The truth is, it is he that too boldly both alters the

Hosted by Google

words, and perverts the meaning of Christ, in putting going to preach, for fleeing from persecution: which liberty if he may lawfully use against the Scriptures, there will then be for us no lawful liberty of flight indeed. But as the word φέυγετε is properly, and necessarily turned "flee," so Christ, saying unto them, "When they persecute you, flee," saith unto them flee, to avoid their persecution, as they also afterwards did. Yet because he directs his speech, immediately, to the twelve apostles designed, who were by their office to preach, as to all the world, so first to the Jews, he chargeth them not to think themselves freed, by their persecution, from preaching, nor so to flee as to forget, or neglect their office of apostleship, but that still in their fleeing they should remember their special calling: telling them both for their provocation, and comfort, that before they would pass through all the cities of Israel he would come, to wit, by the more glorious work of his Spirit, for the advancement of his kingdom. So that in the words of Christ to his apostles, two things are contained: the former a liberty of flight in persecution, and the same so evidently, as that an angel from heaven teaching the contrary, were not to be believed; the other, a charge so to fly, as that for any persecution, they ceased not to preach whithersoever they were driven. And so the answer is easy to that which followeth, namely, that we flee to cities of a strange country to whom we cannot preach, &c. For 1. It is the fulfilling of our office if we preach to the particular flocks over which we are set, not being apostles, as they were: though I could also allege, that we have so preached to others in those cities, as that by the blessing of God working with us, we have gained more to the Lord, than Mr. Helwisse's church consists of. And secondly, I would know, how he, and the people with him have preached to the city of London? Surely not as the apostles did, in the synagogues, and public places: much less do they flee, being persecuted (or go, if so they will have it), from city to city, to preach, as did the apostles.

Where he, Mr. Helwisse, further objecteth that our fleeing is to save ourselves from being as sheep in the midst of wolves, and from being delivered up to councils, &c., pp. 205—207: I answer, that as these trials did necessarily

Hosted by Google

follow upon the apostles' callings, as being to be employed amongst unbelieving Jews, and Gentiles, in their ordinary ministration, so do they not in like manner, or measure of necessity, lie upon us, who are appointed to feed the particular flocks of believers, over which we are set. Acts xx. 17, 28; 1 Pet. v. 1. Only they teach, that, if God so dispose of us, and that we cannot by good means avoid the same, we then patiently, and in faith give witness to Christ's truth, and testament, by suffering these, and all other kind of evils. The Scriptures in many places exhort unto poverty, hunger, nakedness, loss of goods, and lands for Christ's sake; must now the servants of God, therefore, necessarily be poor, and destitute of outward necessaries? Some indeed upon these grounds have vowed wilful poverty: as did this man upon the like, vow (it seems) wilful persecution.

Touching the practice of the apostles, Acts v. 19, 20, 40, 42, and viii. 1, I answer that at other times those very apostles did fly persecution; as did also Paul, though of both as great courage, and zeal, as any other. But for that present they were tied to that very place, and might not depart thence, but were at Jerusalem first soundly to publish and plant the gospel of Christ: as also thence to send, or go to other places, as they were occasioned. Luke xxiv. 47; Acts i. 8. And (excepting the extraordinary occasion of the apostles) the latter of the scriptures he brings, is directly against him: where it is said that the whole church at Jerusalem was scattered abroad, and dispersed, by reason of persecution. And for their preaching to their countrymen the Jews, where they came; and, as they had occasion, to the Gentiles, it is that we also do, and desire to do, as we have occasion, and means: this being always remembered, that we are distinct and entire congregations, in ourselves, which they were not. Acts v. 19, 20; viii. 14; and xi. 22.

Where in the next place he notes, for his purpose, the assault made against Paul and Barnabas in Iconium, Acts xiv. 5, he should also have noted for the truth's sake, that, ver. 6, they being aware of it, fled to Lystra, and Derbe. And for their returning again into the places where they had been persecuted, ver. 21, 22, first, their persecutions in

Hosted by Google

those places had been but by the tumultuous multitude, by the provocation of the Jews, which like a tempest, were soon over, and not by any stablished laws, or settled course of justice; and secondly, it was but the apostles' duties, as being universal men, and having upon them the care of all the churches, 2 Cor. xi. 28, and not being tied to any certain congregation as we are.

The commendations given of the churches of Thessalonica, 2 Thess. i. 4, and of Pergamos, Rev. ii. 13, for their patience in affliction, and that dwelling where Satan's throne was, they kept Christ's name, even when Antipas was martyred, do not reprove our practice at all, p. 207: the like commendations being elsewhere given of others, as I have shown, for keeping the faith with holiness, in their wandering flight from one place, and country to another. Heb. xi. 1, 2, 37, 38. The apostle, 1 Cor. vii., commends them who keep themselves single to avoid trouble in the flesh, and that they may be the more free for the Lord: doth he therefore condemn them that marry in the Lord to avoid fornication? Or doth he not commend both, as doing well? and either in doing better, in divers regards? He that is in danger of uncleanness doth better to marry: and he that is without that danger, and can more freely, in a single state, give himself to the Lord, doth better in that respect, so to abide. So is it in flight, which is allowed, nay required, against natural fear, and many other both inconveniences, and evils, ordinarily, in persecution, as is marriage against fornication besides, as those churches knew not, happily, whether to go to be better, in those days, so neither was their persecution such, but that they might enjoy their mutual fellowship and ministers, and bring up their children and families in the information of the Lord, and his truth, though with great persecution even of some particular men unto death, at times, and by occasions, which in England all men know, we could not possibly do.

That which he adds, p. 220, of Christ's enjoining the man dispossessed of the devil, to go home to his friends, and show them what great things the Lord had done for him, makes as much against themselves as us. For why go not they home every one to his friends, for that end, but abide in London where fewest of their friends are?

Hosted by Google

It is, then, his ignorance to tie all by that special commandment. At another time Christ would not suffer one, so much as to go home, and bid his friends farewell: nor another to bury his father, before they followed him, Luke ix. 59—62; as here on the contrary he would not suffer this man to follow him, but sends him back to his friends: but doth not at all therein forbid him flight in persecution, as Mr. Helwisse gathereth.

That we should not fear men, which can kill the body, but deny ourselves, &c.: we do acknowledge, and by the grace of God, so practise. We have not feared men, that is so feared them, as for their persecutions, to deny any part of the truth of Christ known unto us, or any way to sin against the same: but do keep, as frail men, a good conscience in the obedience of all the parts thereof: having also (the glory be the Lord's! who hath shown us his mercy, and enabled us thereunto) learnt to deny ourselves, though with much weakness, in our country, friends, possessions, riches, credits, liberty, yea and in our lives also in resolution, and will, for Christ's sake, and truth: and, withal, to suffer those kinds of afflictions, for the avoiding of which, many have withdrawn from the same truth, for which they have offered their lives to a magistrate, as resolvedly, as this man hath his for his errors.

Where he saith further, that the cities where we are, neither receive us, nor the word we bring, otherwise than they receive Turks and Jews, he speaks very untruly both of them, and us, as, were it of use, I could show evidently. And lastly, to his demand, page 211, when we will shake of the dust of our feet for a witness against the city, or house, that will not receive us, and depart thence as the apostles did? I answer, when we are apostles, as they were: and do again ask, why did not he, and why do not his companions shake off the dust of their feet against London, which receives them not at all? And if the churches of Christ be thus to shake off the dust of their feet against the cities, which receive not their doctrine, how could the church of Pergamos be commended for dwelling, and continuing in that city, which received not the truth, but had on the contrary, Satan's throne established in it, and persecuted the martyrs of the truth unto death?

Hosted by Google

For flight, then, thus much. As we read that Christ our Lord, the prophets and apostles, did at some times, and ordinarily, avoid and flee persecution, and at other times not; so are we to know, that there are times and occasions seasonable for both. Neither are the words of Christ, "When they persecute you, flee," an absolute commandment, as he thinketh, any more than those of the master to his servant, "When thou hast served me, eat thou and drink thou." Luke xvii. 8. They are a grant of liberty, and a direction how to use it. As we, then, shall perceive either our flying or abiding to be most for God's glory and the good of men, especially of our family and those nearest unto us, and for our own furtherance in holiness; and as we have strength to wade through the dangers of persecutions, so are we with good conscience to use the one or other. Which, our hope and comfort also is, we have done in these our days of sorrow; some of us coming over by banishment, and others otherwise.

And thus have I answered whatsoever in this book hath any colour of reason against our flight in persecution. His rash and ungodly censures, both upon our practice and persons, yea upon the very secret intents of our hearts, I do of purpose pass by, as being the fruit of his stout stomach, and heart soured with his own leaven; assuring myself, that no wise man will for the same, either think us the less, or him the more, truly zealous.

But, for that divers weak persons have been troubled and abused by some other things in the same book, in which also he much insulteth, and that over myself amongst and above others, I think it fit in this place to annex an answer to that part of it which is directed against us, whom he, with others, miscalls Brownists, and and against our (falsely called by him, false) profession.

CHAPTER IV.

THE OUTWARD BAPTISM RECEIVED IN ENGLAND IS LAWFULLY RETAINED.

And to prove our profession of Christ false, and us, the teachers, false prophets he takes his first ground out of our

Hosted by Google

Apology, where a true visible church is described, "a company of people called and separated from the world by the Word of God," &c.; and thereupon concludes peremptorily, pages 123, 124, of his "Mystery," that we are all mere infidels, unbelievers, and without Christ; and taking it for our own grant, that before our separation we were of the world, that is, of them that hate Christ, and cannot receive the spirit of truth, and that believe not in Christ, but lie in wickedness, John vii. 7; xiv. 17; xvi. 9; xvii. 25; 1 John v. 19; he goes about to prove, that if then we were of the world, we are so still, because we have not been joined to Christ by amending our lives, and by being baptized, and so by putting on of Christ by baptism. Acts ii. 38; Gal. iii. 27.

The effect, then, of all is, that, because we have not taken up a new outward washing, or baptism, for that of amendment of life, he but adds for fashion, as he hath done, therefore we are of the world, infidels, haters of Christ, and what not.

For answer, then, first, we grant that, remaining in the assemblies, we were not separated from the world, to wit, in our fellowship; but doth it follow, thereupon, that till our separation we were of the world, namely in our persons? Which is as if he should conclude, that because in a confused heap, as are the assemblies, the good stones are not severed from the rubbish, therefore even they, as the rest, are rubbish also. Were such of the Corinthians as through error, or evil custom, or other infirmity, continued communion with the idolaters in their idolatrous feastings in the idol temples, (whom the apostle therefore exhorts to separate themselves, and to come from among them, 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18,) were they, I say, infidels and darkness? or, doth not the same apostle there expressly call them believers, light, righteousness, notwithstanding that their great failing and evil of ignorance, or human frailty, out of which the Lord did call them? Or was Mr. Helwisse himself, all the while he was unseparated, an infidel, without Christ and his spirit, and hating him? If so he were, considering the great show he made of faith and love, in and to Christ, and the singular manifestations of the Spirit, he was a notorious hypocrite as the earth bore:

Hosted by Google

but if, on the contrary, he did not then hate Christ, but had faith and grace, though in never so small a measure, his proof is of no force, but he himself proved a vain man, that would deny the grace of God in himself, to advantage an error against other men; which is a kind of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, though not of malice, as was that of the Pharisees, yet of preposterous and perverse zeal, of which I wish all the Lord's people may beware.

Secondly, It is not true he saith, that none can come and be joined to Christ without baptism. The Scriptures testify, that so many as believe in Christ, receive him, are engrafted into him, having him living in them, and dwelling in their hearts. John i. 12; Rom. xi. 20; Gal. ii. 20; Eph. iii. 17. Which faith is before baptism, in some men a longer time, in some, a shorter, and in some, also dying unbaptized. Matt. viii. 10; xv. 28; Acts x. 4, 35; Luke xxiii. 40, &c. And according to this was the tenor of Christ's commission to his apostles, by teaching to make disciples or Christians, and to bring men to believe, and afterwards to baptize them. Matt. xxviii. 19; Acts xi. 26; Mark xvi. 16. And to baptize any of years, but being before joined to Christ by actual faith, and so making manifestation, were to profane God's ordinance. Neither is it Paul's meaning, where he tells the Galatians, that "they which had been baptized into Christ, had put on Christ," that they were not joined to Christ before their outward baptism, but to show that their baptism was a lively sign of their union with, and incorporation into Christ, and participation of the washing of his blood and Spirit, as also an effectual means more and more to apply the same unto them; being all their life long to put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and the new man, as the same apostle teacheth, Rom. xiii. 14; Eph. iv. 24. And for Acts ii. 35, it shows, indeed, that they who believe and repent are to be baptized, to wit, being unbaptized before, as they then were, and as we now are not; God having also added to the outward washing or baptism, though in the false church, the inward washing of the Spirit to repentance and amendment of life.

To his inference, pages 127, 128, that "if England be

Hosted by Google

Babylon, out of which the Lord's people are to come, and baptism the seal of the covenant of grace, as we teach, then we retain the baptism of Babylon thereby to be sealed unto the covenant of grace:" I answer, that we retain the seal of the covenant of grace, though ministered in Babylon; and not the baptism of Babylon, but the baptism of the Lord in itself, and by the Babylonians spiritual, usurped and profaned; but, by faith and the Spirit, now sanctified to our use. Which we therefore retain, as we do the same gospel or covenant, by the same men and means there taught and administered unto us; bringing both the one and other thence, as were the holy vessels of the Lord's house of old, brought out of Babylon civil, after their profanation there. Dan. v. 1—4; Ezra i. 7—9. And as well may the doctrines of faith, there ministered and thence brought by us, be called the stolen bread of Babylon, as he, in wantonness of wit, calls the baptism the stolen waters of Babylon.

So that it is neither true he saith, that we were infidels, and without Christ, till our separation: nor that men are made Christians by baptism: nor that we retain the baptism of Babylon. Neither yet, though we ought to receive a new outward washing, which we neither think nor he proves, it being but our failing of ignorance in an outward ordinance, were we thereby debarred from being true Christians, no, nor from being a true visible church.

And as I have elsewhere proved* against others, with whom these men consort, and both of them, herein, with the Papists, that the church is not gathered, nor men thereinto admitted, by baptism; so will I here for the same purpose further add these reasons.

And, first, The church is not given to baptism, but baptism, on the contrary, to the church: as are all other the Lord's public ordinances and oracles. Rom. iii. 2; Psa. cxlvii. 19, 20. And since baptism is a public action, it cannot be performed but by public authority in and of the church, which church, therefore, must be presupposed and before it.

2. John the Baptist did, as we know, baptize many, but yet neither gathered churches, nor received men into them,

* *Vide* "Justification." vol. ii. pp. 293—303.

Hosted by Google

Matt. iii. 5, 6; but lived and died himself a member of the Jewish church. Matt. xi. 11. Therefore the church is not gathered by baptism.

3. If men be received into the church by baptism, then must they, as occasion is, be cast out by being unbaptized; and so if God again give them repentance, they must be received in by a second baptism, and so by a third or fourth, if occasion be. The truth is, such men must renew their covenant with God and his church, by which they were at the first received, but not their outward baptism, to which these and other men's fancy leadeth.

4. To receive in and so to cast out members, are dispensations of Christ's kingly office: whereas, baptism is a work of his prophecy; which is, indeed, to be joined with men's admission into the church, and to follow upon it immediately, if the persons be not before baptized.

Lastly, If the church be gathered by baptism, then will Mr. Helwisse's church appear to all men to be built upon the sand, considering the baptism it had and hath: which was, as I have heard from themselves, on this manner: Mr. Smyth, Mr. Helwisse, and the rest, having utterly dissolved and disclaimed their former church state and ministry, came together to erect a new church by baptism; unto which they also ascribed so great virtue, as that they would not so much as pray together before they had it. And after some straining of courtesy who should begin, and that, of John Baptist, Matt. iii. 14, misalleged, Mr. Smyth baptized first himself, and next Mr. Helwisse, and so the rest, making their particular confessions. Now to let pass his not sanctifying a public action by public prayer, 1 Tim. iv. 4, 5; his taking unto himself that honour which was not given him, either immediately from Christ or by the church, Heb. v. 4; his baptizing himself, which was more than Christ himself did, Matt. iii. 14: I demand, into what church he entered by baptism? or, entering by baptism into no church, how his baptism could be true by their own doctrine? Or, Mr. Smyth's baptism not being true, nor he, by it, entering into any church, how Mr. Helwisse's baptism could be true, or into what church he entered by it? These things thus being, all wise men will think that he had small cause either to be so much

Hosted by Google

enamoured of his own baptism, or so highly to despise other men's for the unorderly or otherwise unlawful administration of it.*

The next clamour he raiseth is against our prophets, whom he so falsifieth, as if by oft and much so calling them, he would make them such, viz. that to draw people to separate, we call and prove England, Babylon, Sodom, and Egypt, out of which God's people must come; but after, when we would persuade to the retaining of the baptism there received, we call it rebellious and apostate Israel, whose circumcision was not to be repeated, when upon their repentance they came unto the passover. For the reproof of which our doctrine, he affirmeth some, and inferreth sundry other untruths. As, first, that we teach men to retain the first and chief badge or mark of Babylon, which is their baptism, the seal of the covenant of grace as we say.

This challenge I answered even now; and shall further, hereafter, justify, the Lord assisting me, the retaining our outward washing without repetition: as I have also disproved that his second affirmation, that there cannot be a church of unbaptized Christians.

Besides, it is not true he saith, that we have no other seal for our whole Christianity, than the baptism we received in England. We have, besides the inward seal of the Spirit, and faith, the promises of the gospel, and supper of the Lord, with many experiments of the love of God, sealing and confirming unto us, that we are Christ's.

His peremptory affirmation, page 129, that "we might have cried long enough, Come from Israel, and separate yourselves from Israel, before any fearing God, or having

* This fact of Mr. Smyth's first baptizing himself, and then Mr. Helwisse, has been doubted by Mr. Smyth's biographers. Crossby and Ivimey, in their respective Histories of the English Baptists, are entirely sceptical on the subject; but Mr. Robinson's testimony must be considered unimpeachable, he having heard, as he declares, the fact "from themselves." It was currently reported and believed in Holland. Mr. Smyth himself justifies such a course of proceeding when necessity requires it. Vide his "Character of the Beast, &c.," p. 58, Ed. 1609; Ivimey's History of the English Baptists, vol. i. p. 115; Hanbury's Historical Memorials, vol. i. p. 267. *Vide* also vol. i. of this work, Notes, pp. 452, 453.

Hosted by Google

understanding of his truth, would have followed us," is but his wild guess, without warrant. And the fear of God being the same, in the hearts of his people now, and of old, yea, greater conscience of sin being required now, according to the greater measure of revelation, why should not the conscience of the like estate of England as well persuade men to separate themselves from the apostacy thereof, to the true church and ordinances, as it did such of all the tribes of Israel, as set their hearts to seek the Lord God of Israel, to separate themselves, with the priests, and Levites, from Jeroboam's apostacy, to Judah and Jerusalem? 2 Chron. xi. 13, 16.

Of like truth with the former, is his after-affirmation, page 129, that if we were true Israelites before our separation, then all we left behind us are true Israelites: for so all the ten tribes under Jeroboam were true Israelites: and all we in the assemblies before our separation were in one estate, &c.

It is true, that the ten tribes in their apostacy, were true Israelites, naturally, and so were the Ishmaelites, and Edomites Abraham's true natural seed. But what is this to our question, which is not about men's natural estate, but about their religions, and church-state? The church is not a natural estate, neither was Abraham and Israel God's peculiar people and church by nature, for they were by nature children of wrath, as well as others, Eph. ii. 3, but by grace, and because God loved them above other people, and separated them into covenant with himself. Deut. vii. 6—8. Our question then being about religion, and men's religious estate, and as they are worshippers of God, Christ our Lord teacheth us in Nathaniel's person, who are true Israelites: namely they in whom there is no guile. John i. 41. And Paul telleth us, that he is not a Jew, who is a Jew outwardly, nor that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh, but that he is a Jew, who is one within, and that circumcision, which is of the heart, &c. But for the ten tribes, or other Abraham's natural seed, in their rebellion against the Lord they were of true plants, degenerate, and changed into the plants of a strange, or false vine. Jer. ii. 21. They were true Israelites, as a thief is a true man, to wit, naturally; but not he, morally; much less they,

Hosted by Google

spiritually, or in the consideration of religion, of which we speak.

And for us, it followeth not, that because we came from the parish assemblies, therefore all that we left behind us were true Israelites, as we. For then the main cause of our separation had been taken away. We did even there, by the great mercy of God, receive grace to be in our measure Nathaniels, and without guile: and so to serve God, and walk with men, though we were ignorant of many of Christ's ordinances, as was Nathaniel without guile, when he was ignorant of his person, which to say of all in the assemblies, and that they are Nathaniels, were false and foolish. Neither could Mr. H. without being reproved by his own heart, say that, when he was a professor in England there was no difference between him, and the atheists, and epicures in the parishes, though in that confused state of things they, and he were of one and the same visible church.

Lastly, To pass by his misputting the words, and misinterpreting the meaning of them that wrote the Apology, by taking that, as meant of the members of the assemblies, which was spoken of such as were separated; as also his bitter upbraiding them with ignorant dissimulation and flattery, through his own rash ignorance, that which he affirmeth of Judah's never denying Israel to be her sister, is his saying, without proof or explanation.

What Judah thought of her, appears by the speech of Abijah the king, 2 Chron. xiii. 4—7, &c: and what the Lord thought of her, we shall show hereafter; howsoever they are called sisters sometimes in respect of their joint estate before the division, Ezek. xxiii. 2—4, and so Edom also was called Israel's brother, in respect of their first fathers, Numb. xx. 14; Obad. x. 12: sometimes in respect of their concurrence in iniquity, and so Sodom also is called a third sister with them. Ezek. xvi. 46. And yet were not their estates alike, no not the two likest of them, though both evil. For there is, besides good and evil, as was Judah in her integrity, and Israel in her apostacy, evil, and worse, both in persons and things, though both evil, compared together. And so as the evils in England are of divers degrees, and kinds, we do proportionably, by way of resemb-

Hosted by Google

lance, term it apostate Israel, Babylon, Sodom, and Egypt, spiritually so called. In respect of the spiritual external government there, not in the hands of the son of David, Christ, the King of saints, but of his usurping adversary, the prelacy, and of the apostate priesthood thence derived: of the will-worship, though of the true God: of the forged holy-days, and other the like defections, we call it apostate Israel; in regard of the great and monstrous confusion there both of persons and things, with the spiritual bondage of the Lord's people to the prelacy, Babylon; in regard of the same bondage, together with the Egyptian darkness spiritual, with other the spiritual botches, and plagues, upon the souls of the body of that church, Egypt: and lastly Sodom, in respect of the iniquity of Sodom abounding there, as pride, fulness of bread, idleness, and want of mercy towards the poor, Ezek. xvi. 49: with contempt of heavenly admonition. Gen. xix. 9, 14.*

The next thing he reproveth is our distinction of churches, and so of sacraments into true, false, and none.† And having in the first place liberally reproached us, he inveighs greatly against our distinctions in general, and the several respects we put of things: betraying plainly therein his tumultuous ignorance, by which he would confound, and blunder all things together: whereas there is nothing more necessary for the just knowledge of things, and ending of controversies, than distinctions, and respects, rightly and seasonably put: which are in disputations, like that distributive justice in many suits of law. For whereas both parties would have all, for some right, which either hath to a part, a just distinction gives unto either his several right, and satisfieth both.

And having spent his breath in reproaching our distinctions of true, false and none, he for our conviction begins with a distinction of worldly things: in which he grants a difference between false and none: as that there is a false hour-glass, and no hour-glass, a false looking-glass, and no looking-glass, &c. whereas, in the ordinances of God (saith he, page 134) as the church, and baptism, there is no such difference; and in so saying he doth indeed offer to the view of all wise men, who have their eyes in their heads,

* *Vide* Mr. Perkins' Exposition upon Jude, p. 147. † Apol. p. 110.

Hosted by Google

Eccl. ii. 14, a looking-glass, wherein both the ill-favoured face of his own distinction, and the vanity of his exception may appear.

The use of a looking-glass is to show what manner the native face of a man is. James i. 23, 24. And the reason why we call such a one false, is, because it doth not that, in truth, which it makes show of, but deceives him that looks in it, for the fashion and portraiture of his countenance. So the use of an hour-glass is to show when the hour is just come about: which we therefore call false, when it doth not so indeed, but deceives him that looks unto it, either by running short, or over. Hence common-sense teacheth, that if there may be a church, or assembly of people making a profession and show of Christ, and Christian baptism, and religion, but not being, and having that indeed, which in show and appearance it seems to be and have, and so but deceiving him that regards it, then may there also be, and so rightly be called, a false church. If reply be made, that this false church is no church, it may as truly be answered, that that false hour-glass is no hour-glass: as in truth, and indeed, it is not an hour-glass, but a three, or five-quarter glass, or over, or under. It is evident by the same common reason of both, that there may be as well a false church, which is not no church, as a false looking, or hour-glass, which are not none: and other conviction needs he not, than by his own instance.

The scriptures he brings for his purpose, which are, "They said they were apostles, and were not, and Jews, and were not," Rev. ii. 2, 9, and iii. 9, he corrupteth very audaciously, though, I hope, much of ignorance: instead of "not," putting "none:" whereas between these there is great difference. For "not" only denieth that which they said they were; whereas "none" extendeth further, as he also intends it, and denies them to be apostles, or Jews at all, or of any sort. They said they were apostles, that is true apostles, sent, and set a work by Christ immediately; but they were not, that is not these, or such, as they pretended themselves to be. They were false apostles, setting themselves a work, and deceitful workers, not, no workers, as elsewhere the apostle calleth them, 2 Cor. xi. 13. They said they were Jews, and were not, that is not Jews within,

Hosted by Google

nor the circumcision of the heart, as Paul expounds the phrase of speech more at large, Rom. ii. 28, 29. For Jews, without doubt, they were, and circumcised in the flesh; for which circumcision, with other Jewish ceremonies, they contended. It is usual with the Scriptures to speak of things in religion, as if they were not at all, when they are not, as they should be; and the reason is, because God doth not accept of them, nor they themselves receive the right fruit thereof. Thus it is said of the inhabitants of Samaria that they feared not the Lord, though it be said immediately before, they feared the Lord, 2 Kings xvii. 32—34: thus Paul saith that he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly, nor that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh, Rom. ii. 28: as he also tells the Corinthians that they cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils, 1 Cor. 10, 21. They did drink of both outwardly, but unlawfully, and of the better without fruit: as he also tells the same Corinthians ch. xi. 17, 18, 20, 21, that by reason of their contentions, and other abuses, their eating the Lord's Supper was not to eat the Lord's Supper, that is, as he expounds himself, not with profit, or for the better, but for the worse. Even so these were not apostles, that is sent of Christ, and whom the churches ought so to receive; nor Jews, that is such as whom God would praise.

The same I answer to Eph. iv. 4, 5, which is after objected, of one body, one church, one faith, one baptism: that is one true faith, church, and baptism. And to hold that, besides that one true, justifying and saving faith, there are not other false faiths, is itself a special point of a false faith, and persuasion. The apostle, 1 Tim. i. 5, speaks of faith unfeigned, from which love springeth: showing therein that there is a feigned, or false faith, which James calleth a dead faith, for the want of this love, and the fruits thereof, the works of mercy. James ii. 17, 20. Yea, the devils themselves believe, and have a kind of faith, ver. 19, as have also some wicked men such a faith, as by which they cast out devils, and do many miracles in Christ's name. Matt. vii. 22, 23. And both the Scriptures and experience teach, that wicked men have a faith, or persuasion of God's favour, and salvation, which is no true faith, and therefore a false faith, or persuasion, and so rightly called. The same may

Hosted by Google

be said of the church, and sacraments, and much more. The consideration of one God, and one Christ, is something different, but directly against these men: for there may be, and are assemblies of false worshippers, of this one God, and one Christ: and therefore false churches, and so their sacraments, accordingly, false sacraments.

And thus much to show how vain his distinction is between God's ordinances, and worldly things, though, even, they be also God's ordinances, as he applieth it: and to prove, that false may as well, and by the same reason, be applied to the outward ordinances of the church, as unto worldly things; as also to answer the scriptures he brings to disprove that part of our distinction, touching a false church. It now remains I prove by the Scriptures, and good reasons grounded thereupon, that there are false churches, and false church ordinances: and that such a church the ten tribes were in their defection, and division from Judah.

And first, Since false is nothing but that which deceiveth under a show, and appearance of that which it is not, (as the knowledge of three Latin words would have taught Mr. Helwisse) and that such churches, or assemblies there are too many, which under a profession of the name, and sundry truths, and ordinances of Christ, do deceive; it followeth necessarily, that there may be, and are, false churches. And thus much in effect he grants elsewhere, viz. that "a false church are they, that say, and make show, they are a true church, and are not." Only he labours upon his ordinary disease in misinterpreting these words, and are not, as if they were and are none; whereas they only deny the thing affirmed, which is, a true church, and no more.

Secondly, In his entrance against us, and everywhere, he condemns our profession, as a false profession, and us as false prophets; as he doth also the profession and prophets of the prelates, and Puritans, as he calleth them, and therein yieldeth necessarily, that the churches making this false profession, under these false prophets, by him so deemed, are false churches. Neither can he turn off the matter, as his custom is, by saying we are no churches, and no prophets; for he knows the prophets, or teachers

Hosted by Google

teach, and the people with them, profess the main truths in the gospel: which he therefore cannot say to be no prophets, or to make no profession.

Thirdly, The apostle, 2 Cor. xi. 26, complains of his perils amongst false brethren, and Gal. ii. 4, that false brethren were crept into the church. Now if there may be (as the apostle expressly teacheth) false brethren, and the same also baptized outwardly, then is a church consisting of such in the body thereof, a false church, and their baptism answerably, false baptism.

Fourthly, The Scriptures, and common-sense teach, that there are false worshippers, of God. Christ our Lord saith of the Samaritans, who feared the Lord and worshipped the God of Jacob, after a manner, and had a temple in Mount Gerizim, 2 Kings xvii. 32, that they worshipped they knew not what: opposing them to true worshippers, and therein calling them false worshippers, and their assembly a false church. John iv. 12, 20—23. And when a Papist prayeth unto God in an unknown tongue, or in the name, or merits of the Virgin Mary; or when any other man "draweth nigh unto God with his mouth, and honoureth him with his lips, but having his heart far from him:" or teacheth for doctrines, men's commandments, Matt. xv. 8, 9; he worshippeth, though in vain, and his prayers, are prayers and sacrifices, though abominable. Prov. xv. 8. He is not then no worshipper, but a false worshipper; and so by consequence, a company, or congregation of such, so combining, and continuing, are falsely called no church, or congregation, but most truly a false church, congregation, or assembly, which are all one.

Lastly, That Israel in Jeroboam's apostacy was a false church, though others have done it sufficiently,* I will plainly prove, (God assisting me) against mine adversary, page 135; answering, in the first place, what he objecteth to the contrary. Which is, that the ten tribes then apostate, were the true seed of Abraham, separated from the world, under the covenant of God, which was the covenant of circumcision, Gen. xvii. 7, 15, as well as Judah in Hezekiah's time, when they came to the passover.

* Mr. Ainsworth, in his "Counter poyson," and other writings.

Hosted by Google

If the church of God had been in those days a natural state, and the covenant a natural covenant, and circumcision a natural sign, or seal, then had the ten tribes, indeed, been within that covenant, and of the true church: into what apostacy, idolatry, or other wickedness soever they did, or could fall: and with them the Ishmaelites, and Edomites also, for they all were alike Abraham's natural seed: yea, with the one and other, the whole world; for there is one common state of nature, and the Jews by it, children of wrath, as well as others. Eph. ii. 3. But since the Lord's covenant with Abraham, and his seed, was no natural or universal covenant, but a covenant of God's special love and promise with his peculiar people, Gen. xvii. 1, 7: in which he bound himself to be their God, that is, all happiness, unto them; and them to perfect, or upright walking before him, Psa. cxliv. 15; having circumcision annexed, as a seal of the righteousness of faith, Rom. iv. 11, it is ignorance too gross thus to measure them by natural respects: or to think that any had a part in that covenant by nature, or natural generation: by which, as before hath been proved, and shall be hereafter, more at large, all are under God's curse, and children of wrath. Neither is it true, that the ten tribes (in their apostacy) were separated from the world under the covenant of God, which was the covenant of circumcision. They were by, and in their apostacy separated from God, his church, ordinances, and worship. 2 Chron. xv. 3. And since the world lieth in wickedness, having the devil for the prince thereof, how were they separated from the world, who served devils in all idolatry, and wickedness? 1 John v. 19; Eph. ii. 2; 2 Chron. xi. 15. Neither is the consequence of any force, because faithful, and obedient Abraham, with his seed in his time, and so successively continuing in his faith, and obedience, were in that the Lord's covenant, and had right to all the gracious promises thereof, that therefore, unfaithful and rebellious Israel, the fathers with the children, so remaining incorrigible, were in, and under the same covenant, and promises of grace; of which more, hereafter.

But, saith he, page 135, "If they had been the false seed of Abraham, then had their circumcision been false,

Hosted by Google

and they a false church." I answer, that, coming of Abraham naturally, and pretending the same faith, and religion with him, and so the same right to the gracious covenant of God, and seal thereof, but being indeed without either the one or other; both believing, and worshipping after a false, and feigned manner; they were, though his true seed in respect of nature, yet in respect of faith, religion, the covenant, and worship of God, his false, and adulterous seed, and even bastards, and the children of whoredoms, as the prophet speaketh, yea, the children of the devil, doing his works, and serving him, and so by his own confession, and undeniable truth, a false church, to the deceiving of themselves, and others. Hos. ii. 4; 2 Chron. xi. 15.

2ndly. Every true church is truly, and rightly gathered, and constituted, for thereby it is, that which it is: whereas Israel considered in her apostacy, and separation from Judah, and as we now speak of her, was not truly, nor rightly gathered, but by most sinful schism, and rebellion both against God, and man: and therefore was no true visible church.

3rdly. The Lord expressly testifieth by his prophets, that he had for her wickedness, and rebellions, wherein she was incorrigible, given her a bill of divorce, and put her away: that she was not his people, nor wife, nor he, her husband: in which respect also it is, that he called Samaria, Aholah, that is, her own tabernacle: as on the other side, he calleth Jerusalem, Aholibah, which is my tabernacle in her. Jer. iii. 8; Hosea i. 9; ii. 2; Ezek. xxiii. 4.

4thly. There was at that time but one only, true, visible church, one temple, one priesthood, one altar, one sacrifice, one kingdom of the Lord, in the hands of the sons of David. And so, the ten tribes in this their apostacy, and division, being neither this church, nor any part of it, but actually divided from it, and that also by a special hand of the Lord's providence, for the punishment of both, could not be the true visible church of God, nor any part of it, whatsoever good, either person, privilege, or thing, is still retained above other people. Deut. xxii. 5, 6; 1 Kings viii.; 2 Chron. xi. 4; xiii. 5, 6.

Lastly, The covenant with Abraham on God's part was, that he would be his God, and the God of his seed, Gen.

Hosted by Google

xvii. 7; and thereof their circumcision was a sign, ver. 8—10. Now we read, 2 Chron. xv. 3, that Israel had been a long time without the true God. By which it appeareth, that Israel, was without the Lord's covenant: and that unto them circumcision could not possibly be a sign, that God was their God. It was by them merely usurped, and in that their usurpation, a false and lying sign, and like a seal set to a blank, yea, like the king's broad seal treacherously usurped, against his express will.

Wicked men, and such as hated to be reformed, and cast God's Word behind them, had nought to do with God's covenant, Psa. l. 16, 17; nor with circumcision, the seal thereof: nor with any other of God's ordinances. Their sacrificing of a lamb was, as if they had cut off a dog's neck, Isa. lxvi. 3; and so consequently their circumcising their children, as if they had cut the foreskin of their dogs: notwithstanding they were true Israelites, yea, true Jews, naturally. They were expressly forbidden by the Lord to meddle with his covenant; and in that their abuse of it, it was a lying sign in the ends, and uses thereof, and no way affording that, which it pretended: neither could they so using it, be by it, at all confirmed, that God was their God. And yet was not the outward cutting afterwards to be repeated, if God gave repentance: neither is the outward washing in the name of the Trinity now, though merely usurped by them, who are forbidden to meddle with it. Neither matters it whether such persons be in true church, or false, which Mr. Helwisse calls none. Both, profane and usurp it, and have the bare outward lying sign, as it is said of Ephraim, or Israel, that she compassed about the Lord with lies, and deceit: whereas Judah ruled with God, and was faithful with the most Holy. Hos. xi. 12.

But for conclusion of this point. If any of the heathen joined themselves unto Israel in her apostacy, and so were circumcised, they being neither Abraham's true seed, by nature, nor by faith, but merely false, and counterfeit, their circumcision must be false circumcision by Mr. Helwisse's own grant: which notwithstanding was not afterwards to be repeated, if God gave them repentance, and to come to Judah to eat the passover. There was one law

Hosted by Google

for the eating of the passover, to him that was home-born, and to him that was a stranger, or sojourner. Exod. xii. 49. And here appeareth a direct warrant for our retaining the outward baptism received and usurped, in the like apostate estate, and assemblies, wherein they, and their families, and synagogues were.

I add, that either the outward baptism received out of a true church must be retained, or else all other churches must be able certainly to discern, what day, and hour a true church falling by degrees, into notorious heresy, idolatry, or other impiety, and still baptizing notwithstanding, becomes a false church, as we hold; or, as Mr. Helwisse will have it, no church. For except other churches can certainly know, and discern this, they cannot with faith receive such members, as unto whom God may give grace, to leave that apostate synagogue, and to come unto them. Such of them, as were baptized, whilst it remained a true church, they must not rebaptize: but such as were baptized after it ceased to be a true church must, say our adversaries, be received in by baptism. But it being impossible for other churches thus to discern of the day, and hour of the removing of a church's candlestick, especially for such as are far off, and have had little, or no meddling with her, it followeth necessarily, that the outward baptism administered in a church or assembly degenerated from a true church into a false, which they call, no church, must be retained upon the party's repentance, without reiteration.

For conclusion then of this point also, I demand, whether a man cast out of the true church for some notorious sin, and for impenitence therein, have true baptism, or no? They will not, neither can they say, he hath, writing of it, as they do: neither indeed hath he true baptism, in the ends, and uses thereof. He must then either have a false baptism, or none. Not none, for then upon his repentance, and re-admission into the church he must be rebaptized: he hath therefore upon him a false baptism. There is then contrary to their doctrine false baptism, which is not none, and the same also to be retained, and by the person's repentance becoming true baptism. Neither matters it, that such a man was baptized in a true church at the first, since by

Hosted by Google

his transgression, his circumcision is made uncircumcision. Rom. ii. 25. In his obstinate iniquity he cannot enjoy the fruit, or benefit of his baptism: which serveth only to make him the more inexcusable, and a more profane covenant-breaker with God. He hath only remaining the outward washing, and that much more without right, than many thousands in England have, or in Rome either.

And thus much for the justifying of the difference in the Apology, between a true, false, and no church, and sacraments; as also for the applying of the same distinction to our present occasion.

The particulars following in his book do more specially concern myself, and writings: against whom, and which, through high persuasion of his own knowledge, and most unmortified affections, together with that zeal of God, which I bear him record he had, though not according unto knowledge, he letteth loose his tongue into most intemperate rage.

And first he reproacheth me, page 138, for the use of that, for the want whereof I have just cause to blame myself: which is my logic, and philosophy, as being none of the gifts, wherewith Christ endued his apostles: wherein he verifieth the old saying, that, Knowledge hath no enemy but ignorance. Logic is nothing but the right use of reason: as is philosophy the love of wisdom Divine and human. And did the apostles want these? Or doth Mr. Helwisse envy unto me my small pittance in them? Would he have me a new Nebuchadnezzar, with an ox's heart in a man's body? Indeed, this his judgment against those arts of wisdom, and reason, well agrees with his ignorant, and brutish dealing against me, and the truth. And for my terms of art, which he also blameth, they are neither many, nor without cause: nor yet so dark, but that an ordinary reader may, as they are explained by me, understand them.

But I come to the points themselves, against which he dealeth: the first whereof is a double consideration I put of baptism: the one taking it, in itself, and as I speak nakedly, and in the essential causes or parts, to wit, washing with water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: the other, in respect of the manner of administering

Hosted by Google

it: namely, the minister by, and the person upon whom, and the communion wherein it is administered. In the former respect I affirm the baptism true, both in England and Rome: but not so in the latter, but on the contrary false, and idolatrous, as being against the second commandment, which forbids nothing but idolatry, and false worship.

Against the former of these respects Mr. H. speaks angrily, as himself confesseth, and ignorantly, as I shall manifest, God assisting me. Yea, I did so manifest in the same place of my book, by the holy vessels of the temple, carried to Babylon: and yet still remaining such in their nature, and right, though in their use, or rather abuse, they became Belshazzar's quaffing bowls. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 7; Ezra i. 7; Dan. v. 3. Likewise the circumcision of the Shechemites was in in itself true circumcision, and they circumcised in the flesh, as Jacob, and his sons were circumcised, Gen. xxxiv. 13, 22. But to call this true circumcision in the right ends, and administration, were to call darkness, light; and profane hypocrisy, the true worship of God. So is there also a true outward baptism, or washing with water in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, both in England and Rome also, notwithstanding the unworthy profanation of that ordinance, in the one, or other place.

The things he objecteth, page 139, for substance, are these. That baptism is a spiritual ordinance; which water, washing, and words are not. That they that are baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. Gal. iii. 27. That there is one baptism of Christ. Eph. iv. 5. That the baptism of Christ is the baptism of amendment of life, for the remission of sins. Mark i. 4. That, except a man be born of water, and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. John iii. 5; Heb. x. 22. That we ought to have our hearts pure from an evil conscience, and to be washed in our bodies with pure water; and that, here is the true matter, wherewith men must be washed, which is, water, and the Holy Ghost: and that we cannot divide the water, and the Spirit in this baptism, being joined together by Christ: and that he that denies washing, or is not washed with the Spirit, is not baptized: and that he that denies washing, or is not washed with water, is not baptized.

Hosted by Google

That which must be first, and chiefly considered for answer, and as the ground of the rest is that, that one baptism mentioned, Eph. iv. hath in it two parts: the sign, and the thing signified: either of which is also in the Scriptures called baptism: the one, the baptism with water, wherewith John baptized, Matt. iii. 11; Mark i. 8, and wherewith all ministers do baptize; which is the outward baptism, and sign of the inward: the other, the baptism with the Holy Ghost, wherewith only Christ, and God do baptize: as there is in like manner, an outward teaching by the Word, and an inward teaching by the Spirit: an outward eating of the Lord's Supper in the use of the signs, and an inward eating of the thing, by faith in the heart. And even this outward washing with water in the name of the Trinity, which he calls "water," "washing," and "words," is in itself a spiritual ordinance, though he take the contrary for granted, as being properly subordinate to man's spiritual estate, and appointed of God to signify, and confirm the inward washing of the soul by the blood, and Spirit of Christ.

And this ground laid, I grant, first, that the outward, and inward baptism are joined together by Christ, and so ought not by men to be separated, but joined together in their time, and order: but deny that, therefore, where the inward baptism by the Spirit is not actually manifested, as in the infants of believers, there the outward is not to be ministered: or that being administered unlawfully in apostate churches, it is no outward baptism at all, nor spiritual in itself, though carnally used, nor to be held upon repentance, without repetition.

The outward circumcision of the flesh, and the inward circumcision in the heart, which it signified, and whereof it did admonish the circumcised, were joined together of God, and so were to be by men, and might not be severed without great iniquity, Deut. x. 16; Jer. iv. 4: were the infants therefore of the true church debarred it? Or being profanely administered amongst the idolatrous, and apostate Israelites, or to the idolatrous proselytes amongst them, did their abuse change the nature of it in itself? Or was it no circumcision at all, and so to be repeated, when the Lord vouchsafed to add the circumcision of the heart?

Hosted by Google

The law of God, (and these words, Thou shalt not lust, and so all the rest) is spiritual in itself, though received, and used never so carnally, Rom. vii. 14: so is the gospel with all the ordinances thereof much more: and the power of God, in itself to salvation, whatsoever use men make of it, or them. Rom. i. 16. The apostle teacheth us, that all the Israelites coming out of Egypt were baptized in the cloud, and in the sea, under Moses, that is, under his ministry, and that they all ate of that spiritual meat, namely manna: and all drank of that spiritual drink, namely the rock, or water flowing out of it, which was Christ. And yet with many of them God was not pleased: neither were they baptized with the Holy Ghost, or effectually made partakers of Christ. 1 Cor. x. 1—5. Where also these two things are plainly manifested. The one, that the outward ordinance, or sign, may be spiritual, to wit, in itself, though the inward power, and thing signified be wanting. 2nd, that there is sometimes an outward baptism, and the same so to be reputed, where there is not the inward baptism by the Holy Ghost: as there is also sometimes an outward eating of the Lord's Supper unworthily, that is, without discerning the Lord's body, or any inward participation thereof, or profit thereby. 1 Cor. xi. 20, 27, 29. The same apostle, as I have formerly noted, complains elsewhere of false brethren creeping into the church, Gal. ii. 4: who, being unbaptized before, were also baptized at this their entry. Take Simon Magus for one: who being convinced of the truth of the gospel, and believing after a sort, did deceive Philip, through hypocrisy, and was by him baptized: remaining notwithstanding in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity all the while, as Peter afterward perceived. Acts viii. 13, 23. And I would know of these double-washers, whether if a man professing the same faith with them in holiness outwardly, but in hypocrisy, should be baptized by them: and that afterwards his heart should strike him, and God give him true repentance, (let it be the person they know of, that fled from us under admonition for sin, and joining to, and being baptized by them, was presently after by themselves found in the same sin, and so censured) whether, I say, they would repeat their outward washing formerly made, as none,

Hosted by Google

because there was not joined with it the inward washing of the Spirit? Or if they think it none, and so the forementioned person not, indeed, received in by baptism, as they speak, wherefore did they then excommunicate the same person?

I conclude, therefore, that there is an outward baptism by water, and an inward baptism by the Spirit: which though they ought not to be severed, in their time, by God's appointment, yet many times are by men's default: that the outward baptism in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, administered in an apostate church, is false baptism in the administration, and yet in itself, and own nature, a spiritual ordinance, though abused: and whose spiritual uses cannot be had without repentance: by which repentance, and the after baptism of the Spirit it is sanctified, and not to be repeated.

The second part of the distinction followeth, page 140, which respects the manner of administering the outward ordinance of baptism: and namely the person by whom, the subject upon which, and the communion wherein it is to be dispensed. In which respects I approve it not as true, either in Rome, or England. And here Mr. H. falls into one of his hot fits of raving against me after an outrageous manner, for justifying such a baptism: where also to make it worse, he adds as my words, these of his own, "that the Spirit of God is not there."

I answer, that there is a great difference between the justifying of the manner of doing a thing (good in itself:) and the holding the thing done (though unlawfully) not to be nothing. Zipporah's wrathful circumcising of her son, and the Israelites' profane circumcising of their children having nought to do to meddle with the Lord's covenant, could not be justified; and yet they were not no circumcision, nor to be reiterated upon them, Exod. iv. 25: Psa. l. 16; Isa. i. 11—13, &c. Simon Magus's receiving baptism, being in the gall of bitterness, and the Corinthians' receiving the Lord's Supper, one hungry and another drunken, could not be justified, and yet the baptism of the one, and Lord's Supper of the other, was not no baptism and no Lord's Supper: nor such as whereof there could be no right use upon the repentance of the persons having so profanely

Hosted by Google

usurped them. The apostles Peter and Paul, teach no such thing, but exhort the one and other to repentance, that so they might have the sanctified use of those very holy things, by them formerly abused so unholily. These, our adversaries, do not justify their marriages in the assemblies, celebrated by the parish priest, as a part of the solemn worship of God: and in that respect against the second commandment, and idolatrous: neither yet account they them no marriages at all, nor cast them away as idols of Babylon: though they can esteem them no other, in the administration there.

But saith he, page 141, if this ground were true, then a Turk baptizing a Turk with water, and these words, in any assembly whatsoever, it is the true baptism of Christ.

It is true, outward baptism profaned and abused; as is also that of midwives and children. Also touching stage-players, of which he speaks in the next leaf, I affirm, that if any parts of the Scripture, or other particulars agreeable thereunto, or any forms of prayers contained therein, be by them uttered upon the stage, they still remain in themselves, and own nature, the truths of God, and forms of prayers conceived by holy men; yea, their prayers, notwithstanding that sinful profanation of them: although that uttering of them be nothing less than* true preaching or true praying. So may there be, and is too commonly, true outward baptism, that is, the very outward thing for substance done, where there is no true baptizing, that is, no true, and lawful manner of administering it. And if the washing with water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, of a fit person, by a lawful minister, in a lawful communion, and manner, be true baptism truly, and lawfully administered: then is washing with water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, by an unlawful minister, of an unfit subject, and in an unsanctified communion, and manner, true baptism unlawfully, and falsely administered. The thing done is the same in both: the difference is only in the manner of doing it.

But between the baptism of a Turk upon a Turk, and of a midwife, I put this difference: that whereas that of a

* Evidently intended for, anything but.

Hosted by Google

Turk is not done as a religious action, but merely in mockery; (as is that of a child, in sport;) the latter, by a midwife, is performed as a religious action upon a member of an apostate church; of which there is, therefore, another consideration to be had, than of that which is done in sport, and mockery, which common sense teacheth to be as nothing: as we may see in an oath, which being taken in jest bindeth not at all, but if taken in earnest, and for a thing lawful, (though profanely) bindeth him that took it.

For the shutting up, then, of this point, let the reader observe, that the baptism which we repeat not, is that, which hath been ministered upon the members, and according to the order (how corrupt soever) of such a church, as wherein the Lord hath his people, and for their sakes, many of his truths, and ordinances, which he so far blesseth unto his elect, as by them (notwithstanding all the confusion there,) he doth communicate, and confirm his saving grace unto them. Of the number of which his elect, we have also, by his grace, testified ourselves to be, as otherwise, so in particular, by coming as his people out of Babylon, or confusion, at his call. And we rather think it our duty to acknowledge the great goodness of God towards us, in passing by the sins of our ignorance, and in blessing unto us, what was of himself, and his own there: than unthankfully to disclaim the least, either inward work of his grace, or outward means by which he wrought it.

In the next place Mr. H. raiseth himself upon his tiptoes, and in vain confidence of his mighty strength, threateneth terribly to strike me with a rod of iron, and to break me in pieces like a potter's vessel. And because he chooseth as his ground of best advantage, a point of our profession, viz.: that baptism comes in the stead of circumcision, which neither he, nor they with him, will in another case acknowledge, I will therefore in the first place prove that ground, by the Scriptures, and reasons unto them agreeable, and so come toward his so sore threatened stroke.

And, first, The apostle dissuading the Colossians, ch. ii. 8—11, from Jewish ceremonies, and in special from cir-

Hosted by Google

cumcision, teacheth them, that in Christ's person dwelleth all fulness: and that in him as the head thereof, the church hath all perfection: who by his circumcision hath abolished the former, as the shadow by the substance: by whom also, and whose circumcision the faithful have their hearts circumcised. But whereas it might be objected, that faithful Abraham had his heart circumcised, and yet, he had withal the outward sign, and seal annexed; the apostle answereth, ver. 12, that they are baptized into Christ: (the effects of which baptism he also noteth down in the same place) and therefore needed not circumcision, as the false apostles bore them in hand: therein directly teaching, that our baptism is instead of their circumcision: as is also our Lord's Supper instead of their passover: which Supper no unbaptized person may eat of, as could no man uncircumcised eat of the passover. Their circumcision was not to be repeated, nor our baptism now, though our eating the Lord's Supper be, as their passover also was. Likewise the Israelites in the wilderness wanting the ordinary sacraments of circumcision and the passover, and having instead of them the extraordinary sacraments of baptism in the sea and cloud, and of manna, and the rock; and that baptism signifying our baptism now, and that manna, and water of the rock, the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ now, 1 Cor. x. 1—4; it is evident that our baptism cometh instead of their circumcision. Besides circumcision was their first, and solemn ordinance of initiation, or entrance, by which, say our adversaries, they were received into the church: so is baptism our first and solemn ordinance of initiation, by which also (say they) men are received into the church now. How then do not they succeed one another, as doth the church now, the church then?

Lastly, Their circumcision then was a sign or seal of the covenant of God; so is our baptism now of the same covenant, as shall be proved hereafter: their circumcision admonishing them of that original corruption of all that came naturally of Adam, not to be purged but with the shedding of the blood of the promised seed: as doth also our baptism admonish us of our original spiritual filthiness, not to be washed away but by the blood of Christ

Hosted by Google

poured upon us: the same outward circumcision yet further signifying the inward circumcision of the heart, as doth our baptism with water the inward baptism of the Spirit: which circumcision was also unto them a note or badge of distinction from the world, as is also baptism now; though by many usurped, as that also then was.

This ground then being cleared, I come to that which must strike this stroke so terribly threatened: which is, that in my granting, and proving in my book, that Rome and England were never in the covenant of God, as Judah was, I do therefore debar myself from bringing my baptism from apostate Israel; and therefore must prove, that circumcision, and so baptism, received in a Babylonish assembly, by a Babylonian, upon a Babylonian, might be retained: and a man so circumcised, eat the passover, page 142. To disprove this he quotes Ezra x. 3, and Nehem. xiii. 23—25, for the putting away of the children, though circumcised, born of the strange wives in Babylon.

I profess, as before, that neither the Catholic, so called, Church of Rome, consisting of many countries and nations, nor the national Church of England, was ever within the covenant of the gospel, or new testament; as was Judah, and with her, Israel before the division; notwithstanding either the particular holy persons that are, or particular churches which happily have been there. Neither of both, therefore, saith Mr. H. can be apostate Israel, which was before her apostacy, the true church, or of it, by our grant. I deny the consequence; and his ignorance it is to think, that only they can be apostate Israel, who were formerly of Judah. For then such of the heathen, as joined to Israel in her apostacy, were not of apostate Israel, because they or their parents were never of Judah. And, by his ground, neither the national English, nor Catholic Romish Church should be antichristian, for neither of both were ever the temple of God, in which Antichrist at first raised himself. 2 Thess. ii. 4. But, as they are apostolic churches, which have received and do keep the faith, and order delivered by the apostles, though the apostles did not gather them personally; so are they answerably apostatical churches, which have taken up, and received an apostatical state, and condition from others, though they were never

Hosted by Google

true in themselves: the rule of nature here having place, which is that the accessory followeth the nature of the principal. We do, likewise, most properly, and immediately call that a schismatical church, which was once either of, or a true church, and hath causelessly made a division: but yet if any other assembly, though having never been of, or a true church, do take up a schismatical profession, and walking, even it is also, though secondarily, a schismatical church, and so to be reputed. So that, though England never was, either in the whole nation, or several parishes, a true visible church, or churches, yet, having taken up the apostate communion, worship, government, ministry, and order of Rome, with the doctrines which defend them; and Rome, of that particular church, which was once planted there, having degenerated by degrees from the primitive constitution, it is truly called by us apostate Israel, for the purpose in hand: and that outward baptism there received, rightly by us retained, as was the outward circumcision in apostate Israel of old.

The scriptures he brings, which are Ezra x. 3; Nehem. xiii. 23—25, make much against him in the general cause, and nothing for him in the particular.

For to let pass other oversights. 1. They prove, that to be of Abraham's seed, carnally, was not enough to make one a member of the church, and within the Lord's covenant of circumcision. For these very children thus "put away," as having no part therein, were, and so are by Mr. H. acknowledged, the males of the Israelites. 2. If any of them thus "put away," had afterwards chosen the Lord God of Israel to be their God, should they have been re-circumcised? Or is there in the Scriptures any syllable tending that way? 3. He is utterly deceived in saying, those "children were born in Babylon:" upon which notwithstanding, he layeth all the weight of his argument. They were born in Canaan, and of the wives of the people near adjoining, as in the same places is expressed: and so their circumcision nothing at all to the circumcision ministered in Babylon: and yet is he more peremptory in this his error, than a wise man would be in the truth. And thus all may see how his rod of iron is

Hosted by Google

proved a broken reed, whose shivers have pierced his own hands.

The next thing he comes to, is, that other ground of ours, for with his by-babblings, and revilings, I will neither trouble myself, nor the reader, thus by him related, that baptism is the vessel of the Lord's house; and as when the house of the Lord was destroyed, and the vessels thereof together with the people carried into Babylon, they remained still the vessels of the Lord's house, in nature, and right, though profaned by Belshazzar; and being brought again out of Babylon to the house of the Lord, were not to be new cast, but being purified, might again be used to holy use: so this holy vessel of baptism, though profaned, in Babylon, being brought again to the house of the Lord, remains still the holy vessel of the Lord's house.

Against this he allegeth, page 144, 1st. That our baptism seeing it was administered upon us all in the assemblies was performed, moulded, and made, in Babylon. 2nd. That the true doctrine, or ordinance of baptism either carried to Rome, or England was by way of comparison the vessel of the Lord's house, and so to be brought back, and used.

The administration of baptism is not the framing, or moulding of it, but the applying, and using of it, being formerly moulded, and made: and this common sense teacheth: otherwise there should be a new vessel made and moulded, or a new ordinance brought into the church every time that baptism is administered. The outward washing, then, with water "in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," was first framed and moulded in the true churches, by John Baptist, Christ and the apostles, and there, at the first, rightly applied, and administered: and was afterwards usurped, and misapplied by, and in the apostate churches, and so is in England amongst the rest: whence we also by the grace of God, have brought it into the Lord's house, built of living stones, orderly laid together, for a spiritual building unto him, 1 Pet. ii. 5: and there have the rightful use of it, being purified by repentance.

More particularly. If the true doctrine of baptism be

Hosted by Google

the vessel of the Lord's house, then, cannot this vessel of the Lord's house be brought out of the mother Babylon, which Rome is, because the doctrine of baptism there is most false in itself: as that, baptism doth by the very work done, confer grace, and wholly abolish original sin: that it imprinteth in the soul of the baptized a character, or mark indelible, by which even the damned in hell, which have been baptized, are differenced from the unbaptized: that it is of absolute necessity to salvation: that such infants are to be baptized as neither of whose parents are sanctified, or faithful: and that it is only to be administered by the Pope's anointed ones, save in the case of necessity, and that then the midwife may do it, with the like. How then can the vessel of the doctrine of true baptism be brought from Babylon, where it is not? And so far as the doctrine is true, so far the baptism is true also, being administered according unto it.

The truth then, is, that, as there were, in the material temple, both the vessels, and doctrine teaching their use, so is there, by proportion, in the church now the vessel of baptism, or thing ordained, which is most properly called the ordinance, Lev. v. 17; Rom. xiii. 1, 2, and the doctrine ordaining, and teaching it: which are two several things in all men's eyes, which have sight in them. And since baptism administered, besides the doctrine which teacheth it, is appointed of God, as a means, to signify, and apply the blood, and Spirit of Christ thereby signified, it is very absurd to deny it to be a vessel for the service of the Lord's house, and of the holy things therein: rightly used in the temple; usurped in Babylon, or elsewhere.

Lastly, Mr. Smyth, and Mr. H. with him in their Character of the Beast, &c., page 51, confess, that if the Antichristians had baptized persons, confessing their sins, and their faith into the name of the Son of God, and the Trinity, it had been true baptism, though in the hands of the Antichristians, as the vessels of the Lord's house in the hands of the Chaldeans, and therefore, needed not repetition, as the vessels needed no new casting: therein acknowledging not the new doctrine, but the outward washing in the name of the Trinity to be the vessel of the Lord's house in Babylon: as also, that there might be baptism so far true, with-

Hosted by Google

out either lawful communion, minister, or subject, (for all are Antichristian,) as that it might be retained without repetition: which is also justly proved from circumcision, administered in a profane usurping family, though naturally Israelitish, either in Babylon, or Canaan, or elsewhere, it matters not, and not to be repeated upon repentance.

In the things following, being partly more general, and partly already handled, I will be the briefer.

He first tells us, page 149, that if we be Judah, and come from Israel, then we must not war against her as against Babylon, since she is the ten tribes, our brethren, which were not false Israelites, but the true seed of Abraham. 1 Kings xii. 24.

Edom also was Israel's brother, and the true seed of Abraham naturally, against whom he was forbidden to war, as against Canaan, Numb. xx. 14, 21; Deut. ii. 4, 5, &c.: was Edom therefore the true church or interested in the Lord's covenant, as well as Israel then? And though Judah was, at that one time, by special restraint, to forbear fighting against the ten tribes, as there was a time also, when she might not fight against Babylon, yet not so at other times; but she was, contrariwise, holpen of the Lord, to make a very great slaughter amongst them. 2 Chron. xiii. 3, 14—17. But for our fighting against England, it is only by the spiritual weapons of our testimony, the Word of God, our practice of Christ's ordinances and sufferings, against the confusion, clergy, and superstitions there: and thus we must war against all iniquity, whether of apostate Israel, or Babylon, it matters not.

His reasons to prove Judah as well as Israel a false church, are of no weight. And 1st, it is not true he saith, that the calves set up at Dan and Bethel did no more make them a false church, for in speaking of false Israelites, as he doth, he betrayeth too great ignorance, than the setting up of the calf in Horeb. For that calf was forthwith taken down again, burnt in the fire, and beaten to powder, the chief authors of the idolatry destroyed, and the rest brought to repentance, by which the wrath of the Lord was pacified, Exod. xxxii. and xxxiii.: whereas the ten tribes continued their idolatry, and with and for it, their schism from the true church Judah, and Jerusalem: and so were

Hosted by Google

for their obstinacy and irrepentance joined with their sin, cast out of God's favour.

Alike frivolous is his second argument: from Solomon's following Ashtoreth, Milcom, and other idols: of which he also repented, as appears by his writing the Book of the Preacher, besides other arguments, and whom Judah is nowhere said to have followed in his idolatry, as did the ten tribes Jeroboam, in his. And not only so, but they went on also from evil to worse: adding to the false worship of the true God the worship of false gods, Baal and others. 1 Kings xvi. 25, 31.

Thirdly, Though Jerusalem was at a time (in the body) called by the prophet, an harlot, and her sins said to be greater than either Samaria's or Sodom's, to wit, considering her estate, and means of bettering (for otherwise her sins in themselves were not comparable to theirs) yet, were there many in her abiding faithful in the Lord's covenant, and the other brought again into the bond thereof, by repentance, after the rod of the Lord's correction had passed over them, and that he had taken the chief rebels from amongst them, Ezek. xx. 37, 38; and in those the true church consisted; the rest not being true members thereof: but a false seed, the plants of a strange vine, by right to have been cut off from the Lord's people, Jer. ii. 21: whereas the ten tribes went on in their sin, without repentance, or return out of their captivity, into the land of Canaan, the proper seat of the church. But of these things I have spoken before at large, as also of the outward baptism received in England, which he here calls the mark of the beast, and us for it, what he pleaseth: whereas, though he, that receives any doctrine, or ordinance of God ministered by the power of Antichrist, may therein be said to receive the mark of the beast, yet that doctrine, or ordinance is not in itself, the mark of the beast, but an holy thing of God, how unlawfully soever administered.

His mistaking the speech in the Apology of the seven thousand in Israel, I have formerly manifested. The peremptory doom which here he passeth upon all in England, and us with them, as out of the state of grace, and salvation, is a fruit of his rashness. Well is it for us, that

Hosted by Google

he is not our judge: and better much had it been for him, if he had judged himself more severely, and others more charitably.

Touching Gal. v. 1, and 2 Cor. iii. 17, teaching, that, "where the Spirit of Christ is, there is liberty:" and that we must "stand fast in the liberty, wherewith Christ hath freed us," I do answer, that as for ourselves, we stand for, and enjoy the liberty of Christ in all things, to our knowledge, and power: so doubt I not but there are thousands in England truly partakers of the liberty of Christ, both from the guilt, and tyranny of sin in their measure, notwithstanding that spiritual external bondage in their church order, and ordinances, through human frailty. Wherein if they, or any of them, either affect ignorance, or pretend it, being "condemned of their own hearts," because they would avoid the cross of Christ, or for any other carnal respects, "God which is greater than their hearts," and searcheth, and knoweth them, will condemn them much more, though we, through love, be persuaded better things of them. 1 John iii. 20.

It is true he addeth, that all who come not out of Babylon, or receive the least mark, or print of the beast, that is yield the least submission unto Antichrist, are threatened with her plagues, and under the Lord's curse. Which shows how greatly the Lord abhorreth, and how all his people ought to abhor from those sins, and also unto what wrath they stand subject without repentance. But, withal, it must be remembered, that as God requireth particular repentance for sins known, so doth he pardon the unknown sins of his servants upon their general repentance arising from true faith in Christ, and having joined with it, an honest and earnest desire, to know, and do the whole will of God: otherwise no flesh could be saved: for no man knoweth how oft he offendeth. Psa. xix. 12. And he who believes not, that as other men may, so God doth know much evil by him, even against all the commandments, which he knows not by himself, (of which he can only repent in general) neither hath learnt to know God aright, nor other men, nor himself, how much soever he presume of his knowledge, which alas, was too, too much this vain man's malady.

Hosted by Google

His other two affirmations, pages 152—155, that, if the faith of the Church of England be true faith, then the church is a true church; and that, if the church be not a true church, then is it a company of infidels, have alike truth in both, and indeed none in either. Cornelius and his family show the falsity of both; who had true faith, and, therefore, were not a company of infidels, and yet, were not a true visible church, of which we speak. Acts x. True faith maketh a true Christian person: but the covenanting, and combining of a company of such into Christian order doth immediately make the church.

And for John xv. 19, and Matt. xii. 30, I do answer, that a man may truly in his person be "chosen out of the world, and for Christ," in his measure, though he be not of a true visible church. There must be true faith, and holiness before the true church; for of faithful persons the church must be gathered: and in reason, the parts must be before the whole to be made of them, and the stones, and timber before the house.

But he adds, that since all in the Church of England drink of one cup, 1 Cor. xi., they are all one body, and so no double respect to be had, nor putting of difference of persons.

It is true, they are all one body, and there should be no such contrary spirits: but all the members of one body should be led by one spirit in a measure: for there is (to wit, in right) "one body, and one spirit," Eph. iv. 4, but who, having in him any light of the Spirit, seeth not the contrary; and that, in that one body of the national, and parishional church, and churches, two contrary spirits rule? By right, there is none but led by the Spirit of Christ in the true church and body of Christ: nor any led by that Spirit, out of it, or in any other society. But that good, whether in persons or things, which Satan hath not had power to destroy, he hath laboured to confound, and mingle with evil, what he possibly could, both by thrusting false brethren into the true church, and by keeping godly persons out of it. So that the servants of God stand in great need as first, of spiritual discerning to know good, and evil, so after, of true zeal on the one side, that they be not for the good's sake entangled with any evil;

Hosted by Google

as also of godly moderation, and sobriety, on the other side, no way to wrong that which is good for the evil's sake, mingled with it: as this man hath done in the frowardness of his heart instead of zeal, making no difference between himself, and others, so walking in his and their best profession, in England: and the most desperate crew of atheists, and epicures in their professed contempt of God.

His plea which followeth, that the Pope and Papists are not true believers, we do receive: and profess withal, that no infants of such, or of any other parents, the one whereof is not faithful, is to be baptized: and practise accordingly, as he knew well. Gen. xvii. 7; 1 Cor. vii. 14. And his accusation that we hold all infants, whether of believing, or unbelieving parents to be baptized, and so practise, is unjust, and but a mere presumption inferred upon our not rebaptizing the baptized formerly in the assemblies. Which our practice, I hope, is sufficiently justified, against his loud, and licentious clamours, (although by them he have affrighted two, or three simple people, from that their baptism so received,) as also, that his peremptory position, that whatsoever is not done aright, is to be accounted as not done at all, and is to be cast away, notwithstanding any after-repentance, is but a short cut of his haste, and fruit of his ignorance: which two being coupled together, cannot but gender many monsters.

CHAPTER V.

OF THE BAPTISM OF INFANTS.

He proceedeth to the baptism of infants; a point of great both difference between us, and weight in itself; and which concerneth all churches, at all times, whereas the former respects only such churches as come out of a state of apostacy.

And to prove infants incapable of baptism, he begins with the covenant of the gospel, or new testament, which he rightly makes one, as, indeed they are in substance; though the new testament may be taken in a stricter sense, for the gospel more clearly dispensed since Christ

Hosted by Google

came in the flesh: touching which covenant he speaketh thus:—

"This is the covenant, saith the Lord, that I will make with the house of Israel, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." Jer. xxxi. 33; Heb. viii. 10. And our Saviour Christ declares this more fully, Mark xvi. 16, where he saith, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel; he that shall believe and be baptized, shall be saved." And here, saith he, pages 162—166, is the new covenant set down both on God's behalf, and theirs, with whom it is made. On God's that he would write his law in men's hearts, by the power of his Spirit in the preaching of the gospel, and will be their God, and save them: and on the people's behalf, to believe the gospel and to be baptized. And hereupon he infers, and concludes that children are not within the covenant of the new testament, or gospel, and therefore not to be baptized.

Let the reader in the first place observe, that the word covenant in the Hebrew, בְּרִית, as Jeremiah hath it, signifieth any compact or agreement upon a difference, between two or more. Which the LXX. in the Greek Bible, and so the apostle after them, turn by a word, διαθήκη, signifying a will or testament properly. So that he who aright understands, and well weighs the very word, will plainly see, how Mr. H. erreth in making the writing of God's law in men's hearts, the covenant on God's behalf, or baptism any part of it on men's behalf. The covenant is the very agreement and promise by mutual accord, for the things to be done, and not the doing of the things, which is the keeping of the covenant or promise made. And so all that can be concluded hence is that God receiveth none into his church but such as in whose hearts he promiseth to write his law; which he promised to do to the infants of the faithful, in promising Abraham to be the God of his seed: and more particularly in promising to circumcise (which is all one with writing his law in) the hearts of the seed of his people. Deut. xxx. 6. By which it is also evidently proved, that the infants of faithful parents are, together with them, within the Lord's covenant.

But to answer more fully: the intent of the prophet, and

Hosted by Google

so of the apostle following him, is to oppose the old covenant, or testament of works written with ink in tables of stone, and the new testament, or covenant of grace written in the hearts of men by the finger of God's Spirit. Exod. xxxi. 18; Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27; 2 Cor. iii. 3. Now the persons with whom the Lord made these covenants, primarily and expressly, both the one and other were men of years; but in whom their infants were included, and so within these the Lord's covenants, though secondarily, and as was agreeable to their estate.

These men profess everywhere, and truly, (although not upon good grounds) that the Israelitish infants were within the old covenant, or testament; and yet when God either proclaimed it upon Mount Sinai, or wrote it in the tables of stone, they knew not what it meant, neither could they have the same use of it with their parents, and others of discretion, as may appear in the particulars contained in the scriptures, Exod. xix. 10, 11, 15, 21, 25: xx. 1, 2, 8, 12, 18, 19, amongst others, where it is set down; doth it therefore follow that those infants were not within the compass of the old testament, or law? So neither followeth it because the infants of the faithful now cannot for the present observe the conditions of the covenant of grace, or reap all the fruits thereof, and particularly, to have the law written in their hearts by the ministry of the gospel, and work of the Holy Ghost, that therefore they are excluded from the covenant of grace, or testament of Christ. Children may with far better reason be denied to have been within the covenant of the old testament, or law, upon which the curse followeth, than to be shut out of the new covenant of grace, and mercy. Gal. iii. 10. And upon this ground infants should not be within either the natural covenant or bond with their parents, or the civil covenant with their magistrates, because they cannot for the present "Honour father and mother," which is the condition of these covenants on their behalf. His exception then, that "infants cannot by the preaching of the gospel, have God's law written in their heart," this being but a condition of the covenant, which respects men of riper years, is of no force.

When the Lord saith to Israel, "I am thy God," his meaning is not to exclude their infants, though he spake

Hosted by Google

not unto them, but to exclude other peoples, and nations: so where he makes this new covenant with those in whose hearts he writes his laws, he doth not debar their children, but wicked men destitute of the Spirit of God, and from under his promise. So for Mark xvi. 15, 16, which he also alleges, where Christ sends his apostles into the world to preach the gospel, and adds that "he who believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved," he no more intends to exclude the infants of the faithful from baptism, because they believe not, than from salvation because they believe not, which is yet more plain in the words following, "but he that believes not shall be damned." Shall children now be damned because they believe not? There is, hence, more colour for that, than that they shall not be baptized because they believe not: for Christ saith not, "he that believes not" shall not be baptized, but "shall be damned." The thing then is, Christ neither excludes the children of believers from baptism, nor from salvation, for want of faith, but unbelievers, and such as refuse the gospel from both. So that the stone upon which these men stumble, is the ignorance of the opposition in the scriptures they bring; which is not between believers, or sanctified persons, and their children, but between them and unbelieving and profane persons; who are shut from the Lord's "covenant, baptism, and salvation." But where in sharing this covenant "on man's behalf," into faith, and baptism, he makes the one part thereof, his being baptized, he speaks he knows not what, and yet wonders that all men believe him not. For as baptism is indeed no part of the covenant, but a sign and seal of further confirmation, so is it principally and in the main end performed, not on man's behalf toward God, but on God's behalf towards men; God, by the outward washing of the body with water, signifying, confirming, and applying the inward washing of the soul, by the blood, and Spirit of Christ, and for the further testification of the admission of the party baptized into the family of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, into whose name he is baptized: whereas, in a second, and inferior respect, it is a work of man unto God, for the profession, and exercise of faith, repentance, and thankfulness, in them who received the former covenant, and promise with the con-

Hosted by Google

firmation thereof, on God's part, towards them, and theirs; as it is also, thirdly, a sign of union between the members of the church; and in the fourth and last place, a badge of Christianity, and sign of distinction between the true church and all false churches. The same considerations are to be had of the Lord's Supper. And they who know not these things, had need have the foundation of the doctrine of baptism, and other principles of Christian religion laid again, Heb. vi. 1, 2; and yet the want of the knowledge of this, and, in especial, that the sacraments are in their first and main end works of God to men, by which he can both declare, and effect his goodness towards infants, though for the present, they neither know it, nor can do anything again to the Lord in answer thereunto, is a main ground of that offence, which these men take at our receiving and baptizing of infants. And if the new covenant or testament consist so much in baptism, as these men think, then could not Adam, and Abraham, and other the holy patriarchs, and prophets unbaptized, have been within the compass of the covenant, and promise of grace, or have had their parts in the testament of Christ, the promised seed. Also if baptism were, especially so great, a part of the covenant, so oft as any either person or church, renewed their covenant, especially after any greater sin, they should so oft renew their baptism also.

These things thus laid down by way of answer, it remains I prove by the Scriptures, and further arguments, that the infants of the faithful are within the compass of the new covenant here spoken of.

And since all children coming naturally of Adam, are conceived, and born in sin, and, by nature, the children of wrath, Psa. li. 5; Eph. ii. 2; if these men believe, as they do of all, that their children so dying shall be saved by Christ, then must they have a part in his testament, or in this new covenant, which are all one. There are not two new covenants, or testaments established in the blood of Christ, but one. And since Christ is propounded unto us as the saviour of his body, which is his church, it is more than strange, that these men will have all infants saved by Christ, and yet none of them to be of his body or church. Eph. v. 23; Col. i. 18.

Hosted by Google

It pleased God, in his special love, to send his Son to take upon him our nature, and so our childhood, that as the head thereof, he might sanctify even that estate for his body, the church: with which he did also in the days of his flesh, visibly communicate his grace, consecrating unto his Father, as their true high-priest, the infants of the Jewish church, by laying his hands on them, and blessing them. Mark x. 13, 16.

I add, if any, either children, or men of years, be to "enter into the kingdom of heaven," they must be born again: and this new birth must be by the Spirit of God working in either, according to their kind, and writing God's law in their hearts; in those of years, distinctly, and by the preaching of the gospel, in infants, otherwise, according to the efficacy of the power, and grace of God.

Lastly, It is evident that the children of the faithful are within this covenant of the gospel or new testament, by that covenant which God made with faithful Abraham, and his seed, adding the seal of circumcision to ratify it. Gen. xvii. 10—14. But, that this was the covenant of the gospel, or new testament, Mr. Helwisse denieth, and opposeth. I will therefore answer what he objecteth, and then prove my exposition, and affirmation by the Scriptures.

And first, he lays down this covenant, Gen. xvii., on the Lord's behalf, thus: "I will establish my covenant between me, and thee, and thy seed after thee, and their generations for an everlasting covenant to be God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee," ver. 7, and on Abraham's behalf, and his seed, in these words, "This is the covenant that thou, and thy seed after thee shall keep, Let every man child among you be circumcised: you shall circumcise the foreskin, as well of him that is born in the house, as of him that is bought with money:" adding for exposition, page 166, that "thus the Lord declares in every particular his covenant with his people, as well what he will do for them, as what he requires them to do, in obedience to him."

A great untruth, and full of ignorance. Is the land of Canaan all that the Lord covenants and promises to give unto Abraham and his seed? What is this but to make the Lord's people an herd of oxen which are promised to

Hosted by Google

be brought into a fat pasture, there to feed at ease? And is circumcision of their males all, in particular, which God requires of his people by covenant, which any profane Shechemite might do, and did as well, and as [diligently as they? and which being done without faith, and repentance, doth no way please but offend God. Isa. i. 11, 12; Heb. xi. 6.

The Lord promised to be a God (even all-sufficient, as ver. 1,) unto Abraham, and his seed, ver. 7, that is, to be all happiness and bliss unto them: for blessed are the people that have the Lord for their God. Psa. cxliv. 15. And except we will say they had only bodies, and no souls, God in promising to be their God, promiseth not only to be the God of their bellies, and backs, but of their souls most; as the soul of a man is most the man. And so Christ himself teacheth against the Sadducees, that God in calling himself the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and so of their seed the Hebrews, means, that he is the God of their souls, and that most specially, which lived when their bodies were dead. Exod. iii. 6; Matt. xxii. 32.

The apostle Paul, who well understood the Lord's meaning, doth interpret the promises of this covenant with Abraham, as meant of better things than Canaan, and indeed as comprehending in them, (though more darkly, according to the dispensation of those times) Christ himself, and in him all spiritual blessings. And so speaking of this covenant, or promise, with, or to Abraham, and his seed, avoucheth, that by his seed is meant Christ, Gal. iii. 15, 16, viz., as the head with his body, the church of the Jews, and Gentiles also in their time "made one in him," Eph. iii. 6; as he also proveth, Rom. iv. 3, 18, and Gal. iii. 6; that Abraham's believing the promise of God for the multiplying of his seed, Gen. xv. 5, 6, and xvii. 4; was imputed to him for righteousness to justification: therein teaching, evidently, that in this promise was comprehended Christ, and spiritual things: otherwise, how could Abraham be justified by believing it? And how carnally soever these men are conceited of this covenant, and promise, Abraham in it saw Christ's day, and seeing it, rejoiced. John viii. 56.

And for the land of Canaan, albeit in itself, and natu-

Hosted by Google

rally, but like other lands, yet was it by the Lord sanctified to spiritual ends, and uses: as to be the peculiar inheritance of God's peculiar people, unto which it was allotted from the first division of the sons of Adam, and distribution of their possession by the Most High, Deut. xxxii. 8; whither he would bring his people, and there plant them in the mountain of his inheritance, in the sanctuary, which his hands had established, Exod. xv. 17: where he would have his tabernacle pitched, and temple built, for his most solemn presence, and worship: out of which land when the ten tribes were carried captive, he is said to have put them out of his sight, 2 Kings xvii. 18: the very land being figuratively holy, and a sacrament of God's presence, and the resting of God's people there a sign of their eternal rest in heaven, Heb. iii. 11; iv. 5, 8: into which not Moses, but Joshua or Jesus, the type of our and their true Jesus, was to bring them. Neither did the Lord indeed promise either entrance into, or continuance in that land, but upon the conditions of eternal life: true faith in the gospel, with the love, and fear of God, and faithful obedience of his commandments: godliness having then as it hath now, and always, the promise of good things for this life, and the life to come: of earthly things then more distinctly and fully, but of heavenly things more generally and sparingly: where now on the contrary, there is a more clear, and full revelation of heavenly things, but the promise of things earthly, more general and sparing. Heb. iii. 17—19, with iv. 2; Lev. xx. 1, 2, &c.; xxvi. 39; Deut. x. 12, 13, with xi. 1, 8, 9, 22—24; 1 Cor. x. 5—7; 1 Tim. iv. 8, 9. It is therefore an ill collection he makes, that because God promised earthly Canaan, therefore not heavenly things: the promise of them was contained in the other, which all amongst them but hypocrites understood and tasted of.

The like folly with the former showeth he, in affirming that the circumcision of their males was all the obedience which God required of Abraham, and his seed, for the keeping of the covenant on their part towards him. For, 1. Circumcision (which must be well considered) was not appointed of God principally for a work of their obedience towards him, but for a sign or seal of confirmation, on his

Hosted by Google

part, towards them, of the righteousness of faith imputed to Abraham, the root, in the promised seed. Rom. iv. 11. 2ndly. It is evident that this covenant unto which the land of Canaan was an appurtenance, was contracted and made with Abraham many years before circumcision was once mentioned. Gen. xii. 3, 6, 7; xiii. 14—16; xv. 1, 4, 5, 18. Which covenant God also renewed with the Israelites his seed in the wilderness, the most of them being uncircumcised. Deut. xxix. and xxx., compared with Josh. v. 2—6. By which it is evident that circumcision was so far from being the substance of the covenant, as that it was not so much as any substantial part of it, but only a sign of ratification, and that specially on God's part, as was Canaan an accessory unto it. 3dly. The apostle, Rom. iv., proving at large, justification by faith, without works, and so specially without circumcision, of which as of a special work the Jews made account, takes Abraham for an instance, and shows, that he was first justified by believing God's free promise touching his seed, Christ, and so the church in him, as well as of uncircumcised Gentiles in their time, as of circumcised Jews: and adds, that after this, he received the seal of circumcision, for the confirmation of this bond of promise, on God's part, having the promise itself before. Which, circumcision, therefore, whosoever presumed to use, whether upon himself, or his infant, not having before the promise of Christ, and faith for justification, with Abraham, he did treacherously usurp the great seal of the King of heaven and earth. The lawful using, then, of circumcision did presuppose, both God's promise, and his faith who was to use it, either upon himself, or his child. And since without faith no man either can, or ever could please God, especially, in the matters of his worship, whereof circumcision was one; and that God appointed his people so to worship him in it, and all other things, as they might please him therein, it followeth necessarily, that he required true faith in all, whom he enjoined, or rather privileged to circumcise their infants. Gen. iv. 4, with Heb. xi. 4—6; Matt. iii. 17; 1 Cor. x. 5; Heb. iii. 17. Neither indeed do the Scriptures of those times, more plenteously testify any one thing, than, that the Israelites did most heinously transgress, and break God's covenant

Hosted by Google

with Abraham and them, when they did use, and observe circumcision very diligently: which had the covenant, on their part, stood in circumcision, they had not done. Isa. xxiv. 5; Jer. xi. 10; Hos. viii. 1. And (for conclusion) that the Lord God should separate a people, as his own peculiar, above all the peoples in the earth, into covenant with himself, to worship him, and to enjoy his special presence, and yet should require no more of them for the keeping of this covenant, than the cutting of their foreskins, is a mere mockery, unworthily blemishing God's great majesty, and from the imagination whereof all godly-wise men do abhor.

Now though this which I have spoken be more than enough, yet will I, for more clearness, annex a few other reasons to prove this covenant with Abraham, and his seed, the covenant of the gospel, and the same with ours, now, for substance; and established in Christ to come, as ours, in Christ come in the flesh.

And, 1. The apostle to the Galatians, iii. 8, expressly teacheth, that the gospel was preached unto Abraham, "In thee shall all the Gentiles be blessed;" and, ver. 17, that the covenant with, and in Abraham's seed, was confirmed of God in respect of Christ, and that 430 years before the law, or old testament was given. And here also the apostle answereth Mr. Helwisse his objection, and removeth that great stone of offence, which he, and others cast in their own way; which is, "that the old testament, or covenant with the ordinances thereof is disanulled, Heb. vii. 18, and that we ought not to frame the new covenant like the old, as we do, in the baptizing of infants, because infants then were circumcised." The apostle answereth directly (to let pass other things) that the covenant with Abraham was confirmed in respect of Christ: and that it was not the law or old testament, which was added 430 years after for transgression, and so is abolished indeed, but could not disannul the former covenant of the gospel.

And because these men (whose recovery I do from mine heart desire of the Lord) do especially stumble at this, that the covenant made with Abraham, and his seed, was the covenant of the law, or old testament, I will (and that briefly as I can) show the clear, and evident difference between these two testaments. Which had such of our later writers*

* Calvin, Bucer, Bucanus.

Hosted by Google

as have been most followed observed and put distinctly, as others* have done, much light had been given for the preventing of this error.

And 1. This difference appears notoriously, in the time. For this old and cancelled covenant was made with the people of Israel in the day when the Lord took them by the hand and brought them out of Egypt, Jer. xxxi. 32, which was 430 years after the covenant made with Abraham, as the scriptures formerly cited teach.

2. The law, or old testament, was given in Mount Sinai, Exod. xix., whereas the covenant with Abraham was first drawn in Ur of the Chaldeans, and afterward confirmed, and renewed in Canaan. Gen. xi., xii., xv., and xvii.

3. The law was given with great terror of burning, fire, and smoke, and blackness, and tempest, on the mount, with the loud sound of the trumpet, as became the glory of God's justice, Exod. xix. 16, 18; Heb. xii. 18: but the covenant with Abraham was free from all terror, and replenished with all sweetness of love, and mercy, and comfort against sin.

4. The old testament had Moses for the mediator, Exod. xix. 14, 19; Gal. iii. 19: whereas Abraham himself received the other from God, in the mediation of Christ, as I have formerly shown.

5. The law was dedicated in the blood of beasts, and established unto the people under the priesthood of the Levites, Exod. xxiv. 6, 7, &c.; Heb. vii. 11: where the covenant with Abraham was established in the promised seed Christ, and in his blood: himself being both priest and sacrifice. Gal. iii. 16.

Lastly. The covenant of the law, or old testament, had indeed the promise of good things heavenly, and earthly, but under the condition of perfect obedience to all the commandments, Lev. xviii. 5; Gal. iii. 10, 12; Deut. xxvii. 26: and under the threatening of the contrary curse to the least breach of any of them. Whereupon, respecting man's corruption, and inability to keep it, Acts xiii. 38, and xv. 10; Rom. viii. 3, 7, it is said to be weak, and unprofitable, yea, generating to bondage, Gal. iv. 24, and the power of sin, 1 Cor. xv. 56, causing wrath, and death, Rom. iv. 15, and

* Melancthon, Chemnitius, Sohnius, Arminius.

Hosted by Google

vii. 5; the letter which killeth, and administration, of death, and condemnation, 2 Cor. iii. 6, 7. But of the covenant, and promise which God made with, and to Abraham, the Scriptures do not so speak, neither can any man having wisdom, and grace. It was profitable every manner of way, and the means both to beget, and nourish faith in him, and his.

The confounding, then, of the covenant given to Abraham with that given by Moses, is in itself a great error, and the ground of this amongst other evils, that it curseth where God blesseth. For where God promised unto Abraham, and his seed a blessing in that covenant, this other of the law bringeth all flesh, as unable to keep it, under God's curse: being given principally for transgression; that is, to discover men's transgressions, and sins, that despairing in themselves they might fly to the gracious promise made to Abraham, and in it, unto Christ to come, and so find mercy with God through repentance. Which covenant, therefore, the Lord upon their repentance, so oft renewed with the seed of Abraham: whereas the covenant of the law admits of no repentance for mercy by it, but stands peremptory in, and upon "Do this, and live:" and "Cursed be he that abideth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." And this so oft renovation of the covenant made with Abraham doth plainly show it not to be the covenant of the law, but of the gospel, whose two general virtues are, faith in Christ, and repentance. Mark i. 15.

But it will be demanded, How the covenant made with Abraham could be called the new covenant, and that by Moses 430 years after, the old covenant, or testament?

First. In respect of the object, upon which the law worketh properly, which is the old man, or part unregenerate: which it convinceth, suppresseth, condemneth, and killeth: whereas the gospel, or gracious promise, as was that to Abraham, respects properly the new man, which it begetteth, and nourisheth.

2ndly. Even the same law in substance with that given to Moses in tables of stone, unto which the ceremonial, and judicial laws, considered apart from Christ, were subordinate, the one for explanation of the first table, the other

Hosted by Google

of the latter, and so as accessories following the nature of the principal, was in substance before the covenant of the gospel, and as old as Adam; in the table of whose heart it was engraven by creation: as being that image of God in which he was made: and which is renewed in us by the Spirit's writing the same law in our hearts, in "wisdom, righteousness, and holiness," Col. iii. 10; Eph. iv. 24; Rom. ii. 14, 15: which is yet more evident in the remnants of the same law unblotted out in all Adam's natural posterity; which covenant of the law was, therefore, before the covenant of the gospel with Abraham, yea, or with Adam either.

3rdly and lastly. The whole body of the Scriptures may be divided into two parts: the law, or old testament, and the gospel, or new. Now, of the old testament Moses is propounded unto us as the minister and mediator: as is Christ for the minister and mediator of the new. For "the law was given by Moses, and grace and truth by Christ Jesus." Not as though Moses preached not the gospel, for he wrote of Christ: and preached the gospel to the Israelites in the wilderness, John v. 46; Heb. iv. 2: nor as if, on the contrary, Christ taught not the law, for we may see the contrary, as elsewhere, so especially Matt v., where he both openeth, and enforceth it against the corrupt glosses of the Pharisees, but because the ministry of Moses was chiefly legal, and the ministry of Christ chiefly evangelical, or of the gospel. In which respect also it is, that we, though the Scriptures never so speak, use to call the writings of Moses, and the prophets, the Old Testament, and those of the evangelists, and apostles, the New Testament. Now unto those two generals; 1. The law most fully, and solemnly published by Moses; and 2. The gospel by Christ, all the particulars of what kind soever dispersed throughout the whole Bible must be referred immediately; and so the covenant made with Abraham, being referred to that clear, and full revelation of Christ come in the flesh, as a part to the head, is after the law given to, and by Moses: whom the Scriptures do everywhere, in that respect, oppose unto Christ, but never Abraham. I proceed.

The Virgin Mary, speaking of the fruit of her womb,

Hosted by Google

Christ, testifieth, that God therein remembered his mercy, as he spake to Abraham, and his seed for ever, Luke i. 41, 42, 54, 55, and Zacharias in the same consideration, that he performed his mercy promised to their forefathers, and remembered his holy covenant, and the oath he sware to their father Abraham, Luke ii. 67, 72, 73, Mary and Zacharias filled with the Holy Ghost do teach that God in his covenant with Abraham, and his seed promised Christ: and, in giving him, remembered the same covenant; with what ghost then do others affirm that in that covenant he promised nothing but the land of Canaan? or how can godly men put out this clear light of the Scriptures shining in their hearts?

The apostle, Rom. iv. 11, calls circumcision, which was the sign of that covenant, the seal of the righteousness of the faith in or of that of the uncircumcision, that is of the faith which he being uncircumcised had, that in his seed Christ should be justification, for believing, uncircumcised Gentiles, as well as circumcised Jews. Whereupon it followeth, if the covenant and seal agree in one, that the covenant itself was of the righteousness of faith, which the gospel bringeth: opposed to the righteousness of the law, which Moses describeth, where he saith, "The man that doth these things, shall live in them." Rom. x. 5, 6. In which place the apostle plainly teacheth, that the covenant renewed with Israel, Deut. xxix. and xxx., was the covenant of the gospel, and righteousness of faith in Abraham's promised seed.

Lastly, The Scriptures do most plainly, and plentifully teach, that the covenant with Abraham and his seed, the Israelitish church, was the same with ours in nature (though diversely dispensed), and therefore the covenant of the gospel. I will note some special places.

We are taught by Christ, Matt. xxi, 41, that the vineyard, which the Jews had should be taken from them, and let out to other husbandmen: and more plainly, ver. 43, that the kingdom of God should be taken from them, and given to a nation, which should bring forth the fruits thereof, Luke xix. 14. Here is the very same kingdom of God, or church whereof they were, and we are subjects; as they elsewhere are called Christ's citizens, and he, their king.

Hosted by Google

Zech. ix. 9; Matt. xxi. 5. Likewise Paul teacheth, that the Gentiles, which before were wild olives, are by faith grafted into the same root, from which the Jews, the natural branches, through unbelief, were broken off: and into which, they should, if they abode not in unbelief, be grafted in again, Rom. xi. 17, 18, 23: making the church of Jews and Gentiles one tree growing upon the same root, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The same apostle also comparing the Ephesians before their calling, with the Jews, saith, "They were in times past without Christ, having no hope, and without God in the world," Eph. ii. 11, 12, 17: therein showing that the Jews in their right estate and calling, had all these; as they also were near before, the Ephesians being of far off, made near by the blood of Christ: unto which add that the Gentiles were to be made by the preaching of the gospel, co-heirs, and one body, with the Jews, who were before the heirs of promise, Eph. iii. 4—6; Heb. vi. 27: and having all been baptized, and all eaten of the same spiritual meat, and drunken of the same spiritual drink, Christ.

And such is the clearness of those places to prove the covenant and church, with and of Abraham and his seed, the same in nature with ours, and so the covenant, and church of the gospel, as that he who goes about to darken their light, would cover the sun with a ragged clout. And as every by-way, and false profession (notwithstanding any other likely things in it) hath some or other such notorious error, as that all having spiritual eyes, not dazzled too much some way or other, may discover it: so would the Lord mark out this profession of Anabaptistry, as not from heaven, by this error, that the covenant with Abraham, "I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed," is the covenant of the law, and not of the gospel. Upon which, notwithstanding, doth depend the rejecting of infants from the church and baptism: as also the repeating of the baptism received in false churches, as may appear to him, who well observes their pleading for apostate Israel, as a true church because it was Abraham's carnal seed, and so had circumcision as a seal of a carnal covenant.

And, here, I think it a fit place to lay down such scriptures and grounds, as, upon which we admit the infants

Hosted by Google

of the faithful into the church, and to the baptism thereof: and so, after to answer what is objected, intermingling also, amongst mine answers, other proofs, as occasion is.

Now 1. These men grant, that, according to the covenant mentioned, Jer. xxxi., and Heb. viii., the church is to be gathered, and baptism to be administered: and that the infants of the faithful (for they hold it of all), are under a covenant, or promise of salvation, by Christ; whence I conclude, that since there is but one new covenant, or testament established in the blood of Christ, therefore these infants (and of others hereafter) have interest in the church gathered according to this covenant, and in the baptism thereof.

2. If the covenant made with Abraham and his seed, whereof circumcision was a seal, were the covenant of the gospel, or new testament, as I have formerly proved, then standeth it good to all the faithful, and their seed to the world's end, notwithstanding the different ordinances according to the considerations of Christ's being to come, and being come in the flesh. And so these men denying our seed this covenant, and privilege of entrance, do deny the gospel and new testament. And if "the kingdom of God," or church state of the Jews, which did comprehend infants with their parents, be given to us, and we made "one body" with them, then must the church now comprehend infants also with their parents: otherwise we are not the same body, and kingdom with them. Matt. xxi. 43; Eph. iii. 6. And if with the unbelieving Jews, their infants were "broken off" (who are, otherwise, unbroken off at this day), then must our infants be planted in with us, whom God hath given to believe: otherwise we are not "planted in their place." And if the Jews shall be "grafted in again," which "again" shows it to be of them who had been grafted in before, if they continue not in belief, then must the infants be grafted in with their parents at the first, and so our seed with us. Rom. xi. 17, 23.

3. That God did, out of his special love, separate from the world, the infants with their beloved parents into his church and covenant under the seal thereof, before Christ's coming, the Scriptures expressly teach, and every one will grant. Gen. xvii. 7; Lev. xx. 24, 26; Deut. xxix. 10, 11.

Hosted by Google

Except these men can show where God hath cast the infants of those beloved parents out of the church into the world, and taken that his love from them, they must remain in the church to the world's end. For what God hath once established, God only can repeal: and that this covenant with Abraham was not the old cancelled covenant, or testament, I have proved before. They bid us prove that children are of the church, and to be baptized: but we require of them proof how they are cast out of the church, and baptism thereof: and how the grace of God is so shortened by Christ's coming in the flesh, as to cast out of the church, the greatest part of the church before, the infants of believers?

4. The Lord Jesus sent out his apostles, Matt. xxviii. 19, to "teach," or make disciples, "all nations," and to "baptize them:" opposing all nations to that one nation of the Jews: as if he should have said thus: I have formerly declared my will to that one nation, and circumcised it: go you now, and "teach all nations," and baptize them. Now if Christ's meaning had been, that they should not with the parents (being made disciples and baptized) baptize the children, as before they had with the parents (being made disciples and circumcised) circumcised the children, it had been needful he had given them a caveat to leave the children of the faithful out in the world, though they had formerly been in the church. If it be objected, that they who were taught, and "believed, were to be baptized," therefore not infants, I deny the consequence: which should be, if it were true, and therefore not infidels, and such as refuse the gospel. And this is the opposition which the Scriptures make, setting impenitent and unbelieving persons, against the penitent and believers, and not children against their parents, which is childish to imagine.

5. The apostle Peter, Acts ii. 38, 39, exhorts the Jews to repent, and to be baptized, upon this ground, that "the promise was made to them, and their children, and to all afar off as many as the Lord should call." As if he should say, God hath promised unto Abraham, that he would be his God, and the God of his seed, in that blessed seed Christ. He hath now remembered his holy covenant, or

Hosted by Google

promise, and Christ is come to you his own. Luke i. 72; John i. 13. Do not by your unbelief, and impenitence deprive yourselves, and your children of the fruit of this gracious promise: but that it may be profitable to you, and them, repent, and so be baptized for your confirmation: and let the seal be set to the covenant in which you and your children are.

To elude this place alleged in my former book, Mr. Helwisse, in page 177, comments upon it in these words: "The apostle saith to and of all the unbelieving Jews, and Gentiles, The promise is made to you, and to your children, even as many as the Lord shall call:" and so taking his own imagination both for text and exposition, he bids me "prove that by children there are meant infants."

These words, "to them that are afar off," which he leaves out in his accustomed boldness with the Scriptures, with the words following, are not meant of the Gentiles at all, but of the Jews "far off" in time, as the original Greek beareth it. For neither was Peter himself yet so well informed of the calling of the Gentiles, neither, had he so been, was it then a fit time to speak of it to the weak Jews. He speaks, then, indefinitely of the Jews as the seed of Abraham, and within the Lord's covenant, or promise: whom therefore, Acts iii. 25, he calls the sons of the covenant: and to the Jew alone, as is evident, where, Acts ii. 14, 16, 22, 29, he quotes the prophecies of Joel, and David: which to unbelieving Gentiles had been in vain. Yea, that of the promise he directs distinctly to such Jews only, as had the work of grace begun in them: being "pricked in their hearts" for the crucifying of Christ, and earnestly set to know, and do the will of God. ver. 37, 39.

That by "children" here are meant infants, I have, by the drift of the place, and conference of other scriptures, proved; and that the Holy Ghost speaks of the covenant with Abraham, neither was there, otherwise, cause of naming their children.

Where he further bids me prove that "the inheritance of the kingdom of heaven goes by succession of generation, as the land of Canaan did," he begets bastardly errors of his own, and then would have me nourish them. For neither did the land of Canaan come by succession of

Hosted by Google

generation, but by God's promise made upon condition of faith and holiness, as I have formerly proved; much less doth the kingdom of heaven, but by God's gracious promise and gift, both to young and old. These men think the kingdom of heaven comes to all infants so dying; and doth it, therefore, come by carnal generation? If it come otherwise to all, and by the free grace of God in Christ, as they suppose; can they see no other way, but it must needs come to the infants of the faithful, by carnal generation? as if their estate were worse than the estate of all the rest?

Add to this scripture that which we read, Acts xvi. 14, 15, that God having "opened the heart of Lydia," to attend to and believe the word of Paul: "she was baptized, and her family." She believed, and the fruits and effect thereof was, she and her family were baptized. With these things doth agree Christ our Lord's taking the little children (to wit of the Jewish church) in his arms, his blessing them, that is, his communicating his grace with them, and pronouncing that of such is the kingdom of heaven: as also his commanding the bringing of such unto him. Mark x. 14, 16. In blessing them visibly, he shows them to be lawful members of his visible church or body; and more plainly in pronouncing the kingdom of heaven, which is his church upon earth, to be of such. In commanding such to be brought unto him, he commands them by consequence, to be baptized; since they cannot be brought unto him personally, as then, nor otherwise outwardly, or by men, save by baptism. And if infants be to partake of Christ's blood, and Spirit, there must be some ordinary means to apply them, God working ordinarily by ordinary means, and the same none but baptism, that lavacher (laver) of the new birth, as the apostle calleth it. Tit. iii. 5.

6. Lastly, Paul testifieth, 1 Cor. vii. 14, that if one of the parents be a believer, the "children are holy," viz. with the holiness of the covenant (secret things being left to God) who otherwise, are unholy. Neither is it truly answered, that they are only holy to their parents' use, as is the unbelieving wife to the use of her husband. For, 1. They must either be holy in their persons, or they cannot be saved. 2. He saith the unbelieving wife is sanctified in, or to her believing husband: but he saith not that children

Hosted by Google

are sanctified to their parents, but simply that they are sanctified, or holy. 3. It is not true that children are sanctified to the parents there spoken of: the one of them being unbelieving to whom nothing is sanctified. Tit. i. 15. Lastly, The very drift of the place proves, that the apostle hath reference to the covenant of Abraham, "I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed." The thing he intends, is, to prove it lawful for a believing husband, or wife to abide with an unbelieving wife, or husband. This he proves by the covenant made with Abraham, and with every faithful son and daughter of Abraham, that he will be the God of his or her seed: and so endow them with the holiness of the covenant: and that, therefore, they should not make scruple of living with their (though unbelieving, if otherwise lawful) wives, and husbands. And in this interpretation is force of argument, both for the apostle's meaning, and Corinthians' satisfaction. And so, the seed of the faithful being holy with the holiness of the covenant are, necessarily, within the same covenant which halloweth them.

Now, whereas, some marvel why the Holy Ghost speaks not more plainly, and expressly of the admission of infants into the church and baptism thereof, they must remember, 1. That none must presume to teach the Lord how to speak, but that all are with reverence to search out his meaning. 2. That they may with as much reason marvel, why there is no express mention made of the casting out of the Jewish infants with their unbelieving parents. In the very same places the Holy Ghost speaks of the taking the kingdom of God from them, for not bringing forth fruit; and of giving it to the Gentiles, who would bring forth fruit: of breaking off the natural branches for unbelief; and of planting in the Gentiles by faith. Now here is no mention of the infants of either. Both the one and other are comprehended for those outward prerogatives and dispensations, in their parents, as the branches in the roots: the infants of the godly, in their godly parents, according to the tenor of God's mercy: the infants of the ungodly in their ungodly parents, in the tenor of his justice, of which more hereafter.

And here, for the better clearing of things following thereabout, it is of special use to observe the divers con-

Hosted by Google

siderations, and respects, in which the Scriptures speak of the Jewish church and ordinances: which are in number three.

First, Considering the Israelites, in their just constitution and calling of God, they were the first-fruits and root, with the mass and branches, holy: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, faithful persons, and their posterity an holy people unto the Lord their God: separated unto him from all other people: beloved of him, and out of his love chosen to be a precious people unto himself; above all the people on the earth: in whom God saw none iniquity, nor transgression: to whom belonged the adoption, glory, covenants, constitution of the law, worship, and promises: God's children, having him their Father: being the heir, and heirs of promise: his dearest son, and the child of his delight: natural branches, and in the same regard, Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles: Christ's own: in Christ: without whom the Gentiles were: and the twelve tribes worshipping God instantly, day and night, in hope of the promised Christ. Rom. xi. 16; Lev. xx. 26; Deut. vii. 6—8; Numb. xxiii. 21; Rom. ix. 4; Isa. lxiii. 16; Exod. iv. 22; Gal. iv. 1; Heb. vi. 17; Jer. xxxi. 20; Rom. xi. 21; Gal. ii. 15; John i. 11; Eph. ii. 12; Acts xxvi. 6, 7. So for their ordinances, in their institution and right use; their circumcision was a seal, or sign of the righteousness of faith: their offerings a sweet savour unto the Lord, for the forgiveness of sins, as leading to Christ by faith: their washings applying the blood of Christ, which they figured, Rom. iv. 11; Heb. iv. 2; Lev. iv. 26, 31, 35; Numb. xv. 24—26: unto which David had respect, when he prayed, that for the forgiveness of his adultery and murder, God would wash him thoroughly from his iniquities, and purge him with hyssop, Psa. li. 4, 9, with Lev. xiv. 4, &c., that he might be clean. Thus were the oracles given, "lively:" the law, "spiritual:" the manna and rock, "spiritual," and sacramentally, "Christ." Acts vii. 38; Rom. vii. 12, 14; 1 Cor. x. 3, 4.

Secondly, The Scriptures, sometimes, speak of that church and ordinances by way of comparison with the church and ordinances after Christ's death, and ascension. And in that respect the apostle, comparing not person

Hosted by Google

with person, but church with church, calls it, though "the heir," yet a child, in the nonage: and the ordinances tutors, and governors, under which it was, Gal. iv. 1; ii. 4; but the church now a man of full age, and so freed from them unto greater liberty. The person is the same both a child, and a man grown: though not to be trained up after the same manner: even such is the difference between them and us. They as a child, had a harder hand held over them, and were stinted sundry ways, where we are free. They were taught by signs, and hand-writings, and pointings with the finger, as it were: where our institution is more manlike, and simple. They had earthly things more distinctly, and fully; we, heavenly. In which respect, the church since Christ's ascension, and possession of heavenly glory, is called more especially "the kingdom of heaven," which he dispenseth, with more than kingly bounty in the largess of his spirit. Matt. xi. 11. They had the gospel by "the prophets shining as a light in a dark place:" we, by Christ, and the apostles, "as the dawning of the day, and morning star." 2 Pet. i. 19. They had the prophecies, and "shadows of good things to come," Heb. x. 1: we, the stories and remembrances of the same good things to come, even Christ exhibited according to the promise of the Father. 1 Cor. xi. 24. In which respect it is also said, Gal. iii. 24, 25, that faith was not come to them: but that "they were shut up into the faith to be revealed:" and that "they died, and received not the promise," to wit, Christ come in the flesh. Heb. xi. 34, 40. And in this consideration, and comparison, neither Abraham, nor David received the promise, or had faith come unto them, or "were made perfect," as the apostle speaketh.

Thirdly, The Scriptures do oft speak of the Jewish church, and ordinances, in respect of the degenerate state of the one, and corrupt abuse of the other, in that estate. Which, as at other times, so were the one, and other very notable in the days of Christ, and his apostles: the leaven of pharisaical hypocrisy, besides the worse error of the Sadducees, having so far infected, as that the greatest part of the Israelites being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and going about to establish their own righteousness

Hosted by Google

did not submit themselves to the righteousness of God, in receiving Christ. Rom. x. 3. They did not consider the law as given for transgression and to kill them, as revealing the will of God in the rigour of justice, and his eternal, and unchangeable judgment against sin, Gal. iii. 19; Rom. vii. 11: unto which also the sacrifices, and ceremonies served in their legal, and literal use, that so despairing in themselves, they might fly to the free promise of grace in that promised seed of Abraham now come; but taking the law, and ordinances thereof, to be for outward discipline only, they imagined they might by outward obedience satisfy it, and therein be justified before God: and so did glory in the outward works, and ceremonies thereof: especially in their "circumcision of the flesh." Rom. ii. 17. And as the most of them conceiving carnally or fleshlily of the Lord's covenant did glory in the flesh, and that they were Abraham's seed, and circumcised, and so despised the free promise of grace in Christ, so others of them receiving him in part, did mingle with the righteousness of faith the righteousness of the law, Phil. iii. 3, 4; souring also with that leaven many of the Gentiles especially in the churches of Galatia. Whereupon it was, that the apostle wrote to the Hebrews, and Galatians as he did, both of the persons, and things we speak of.

The persons, whether Jews, or Judaising Christians, glorying in the works of the law, especially in their circumcision in the flesh, he calls Abraham's seed according to the flesh, carnal, and under the yoke of Ishmaelitish bondage, of whom Ishmael was a figure; who being the son of the bond-woman, and born after the flesh, or ordinary course of nature, mocked at him who was born after the promise, and was therefore cast out of Abraham's house; and so is propounded as a figure of all them, Jews, or Gentiles, who in the confidence of works, reject the promise of grace, and persecute them that embrace it; bringing themselves also therein under the bondage of the whole law. And thus all, whether Jews or Gentiles, then or now, despising the free promise of grace, and looking to works for justification, were and are rank Ishmaelites, and of Abraham's seed according to the flesh, as the apostle expressly taxeth the Galatians, desiring to be under the

Hosted by Google

law, though not descending naturally of Abraham. Phil. iii. 3; Gal. iii. 3, and v. 1, 3, 4; Gen. xvi. 1—4, and xxi. 9, 10; Gal. iv. 21—23, 29—31.

Now, that I may apply these things to the present purpose, what is all this of Abraham's seed, according to the flesh, in the apostle's meaning, to the infants of the faithful, whether of the Jews formerly, or Gentiles now? Did, or do they, as Ishmael, glory in the flesh, and mock at God's promise, or any way reject Christ? Did, or do they "establish the righteousness of the law, and of works," or "persecute him that is born after the Spirit," as all they who are "born after the flesh," in the apostle's meaning, did, and always do? Only they, who thus Ishmael-like, glory in works, and persecute the true believers, are by the apostle called Abraham's seed, according to the flesh, and of Ishmael. So for the ordinances, and works of the law thus abused, and perverted for justification, they were base, and beggarly, unprofitable, unholy, unhallowing, yea dross and dung: yea, pernicious, and hurtful, cursing, and killing them, who so wrought, or deemed them. And thus considered, the apostle to the Galatians, Philippians, and Hebrews speaketh of them; giving them, as Luther used to say, ignominious names, having to do with those, who either did, or were in special danger, thus to pervert them.

And these grounds thus laid, unto that his objection, page 167, that "the covenant made with Abraham was a carnal covenant, because it had a worldly sanctuary, and priesthood, and carnal rites purifying the flesh, but not purging the spirit," I do answer, that those ordinances were no part of the covenant made with Abraham, but accessories unto the law given 430 years after: though there might be a spiritual use of them, and was, by faith, as of any ordinances now and as of the moral law itself, to them that believe and repent: but in, and according unto this lawful use of them the apostle speaketh not, but in respect of their abuse, as either severed from Christ, as their end; or joined with him for justification.

His assertion, so oft repeated, that "God in his covenant with Abraham, promised but worldly things, and so required only carnal obedience," I have formerly refuted,

Hosted by Google

as a notorious ground of Judaism and Pharisaism. Neither was it the more a carnal covenant, because the sign was set in the flesh, than is ours now, because baptism is administered upon the flesh, or bodies of the persons baptized.

But where he adds, that "the judgment for the breaking of the covenant of circumcision was a worldly judgment," and that "no judgment of condemnation as pronounced against any, though presumptuously breaking the ordinances, and law of Moses, but bodily death," quoting for that purpose Gen. xvii. 14; Numb. xv. 30; Heb. x. 28, he proceeds on, indeed, from Pharisaism, which made the promises, and Messiah carnal, to plain Sadducism, which denied a resurrection, especially unto the Jews, which, as it is written of them, hath been the persuasion of divers Anabaptists in former times. For if eternal death were not threatened the Jews for breaking the law, and commandments given by Moses, though presumptuously and blasphemously, of which he speaks, Numb. xv. 30, nor for the worshipping of false gods, of which sin Paul speaks, Heb. x. 28, compared with Deut. xvii. 2, 3, 6, then, for no sin whatsoever, and so there is no judgment to come, nor needs be no Christ to save from it.

The scriptures quoted speak indeed of bodily death, but including in it spiritual death, without repentance, as did their bodily blessings promised include spiritual. The apostle Paul speaking of the last judgment, Rom. ii. 12, saith that "the Jews sinning, in or under the law, should be condemned," (to wit eternally) "by the law." It is true he addeth, that "they who so sinned, might through repentance be saved:" and so may they that sin against the gospel now, except their sin be against the Holy Ghost, which was then unpardonable, as now, and in so saying, he grants, though he observe it not, that the sin then was in itself, and without repentance, damnable.

He adds, page 170, that "by our ground we must baptize all our household, and infants, both born in the house, and bought with money." I answer, 1. That it followeth not, that if we succeed the Jews in the covenant of the Lord, and our baptism and Lord's Supper, their circumcision and passover, therefore there must be an agreement in all

Hosted by Google

the particulars about them. The substance of the Lord's covenant with Abraham, was, that he would be his God, and the God of his seed: and this about his bond-servants was an accessory unto it. And of it there was a more special reason for them, than for us: because they were to be separated, even civilly, in a more special manner from uncircumcised persons, than we now from persons unbaptized, as appeareth, Ezra x. 3, 11, &c.; Neh. ix. 2, and xiii. 3, 23, 25, 30; Dan. i. 8; Acts x. 9—11, and xi. 3, &c. 2. Even the families, and households of the faithful now, if they be in the estate of Abraham's family, are to be baptized also.

And for this purpose, it shall be useful to consider, what the Scriptures both promise, and testify of families, and households. The Lord promised Abraham the father of the faithful, that in him all the families of the earth should be blessed: bids him circumcise all the males of his family, which he knew before he would command to keep the way of the Lord. Gen. xviii. 19. As Jacob also purged his household from idolatry, and all uncleanness, that he might sacrifice unto God with them. Thus Joshua professeth for himself, and his household, that they will serve the Lord: and David, that he who walked in a perfect way should serve him: and that none working deceit, should dwell in his house. Accordingly the Lord told Zaccheus, when he became a son of Abraham, that that day salvation was come into his house. We read likewise of Cornelius, that he was a devout man, and one that feared God with all his household: as was the jailor also converted, and baptized, with all his family. Gen. xviii. 19, and xxi. 2, 3, 12, xii. 3, xvii. 13, xxxv. 2; Josh. xxiv. 15; Psa. ci. 6, 7; Luke xix. 9; Acts x. 2, xvi. 32—34. And lastly, in the places brought by Mr. Helwisse for the gathering of the church under Christ, the Lord promiseth to make his covenant with the house, or family of Israel, and with the family of Judah. Jer. xxxi. 31; Heb. viii. 8. In all which, with other scriptures, we see how the tenor of the Lord's promise, and blessing runs upon godly governors, and their families. Nor but that it comes oft to pass otherwise, and that faithful governors have unbelievers in their households: but that this is the ordinary, and orderly

Hosted by Google

state of things, and where it falls out otherwise, it is, at the least, the governors' cross, if not their sin. Now in this, as in all other particulars, we must consider of the dispensation of the Lord's ordinances, according to the orderly state of things. But to conceive, that Abraham would circumcise any unbelieving, or unholy person, so appearing, or seed of such, on both sides, is to accuse "the father of the faithful" of unfaithful dealing with the seal of the Lord's covenant, in setting it upon them, who had no part in it, nor promise of "God to be their God:" though I doubt not but, they under godly government in the family, may be admitted into the church upon the manifestation of a very small measure of grace, with promise of submission unto all good means of growth, public, and private; as might they yet with a lesser measure have been admitted into the Israelitish church, having a far less measure of revelation of grace, than we now.

He addeth, page 168, that "baptism is by John taught to be the baptism of amendment of life, and remission of sins," Mark i. 4, the burying into the death of Christ, that men might walk in newness of life, Rom. vi. 4, and the putting on of Christ by faith, Gal. iii. 26, 27.

I answer, that these are preparations unto, and ends and uses of baptism for men of years: and should not be alleged to the prejudice of infants: no more than their want of faith, by which men of years are justified, or of works, by which they are to be judged, to the prejudice of the salvation of infants, which have them not. Christ our Lord had the same outward circumcision with the Jews, and the same baptism with us, and yet neither the same preparation unto, nor ends or uses of the one or other, with them or us. Luke ii. 21; Matt. iii. 16.

Besides, upon this ground, any might have excepted against the circumcision of infants of old. Abraham believed before he was circumcised, Rom. iv. 3, 11: so the ends and uses of circumcision were, to be a seal of the righteousness of faith, and to confirm, that God was the God of the person circumcised, Gen. xvii.: as also to teach, that nothing clean could come of the unclean seed of man, Job xiv. 4: to admonish of the circumcision of the heart, Deut. x. 16; Jer. iv. 4; 1 Sam. xiv. 6; xvii. 36;

Hosted by Google

Judges xiv. 3; Acts xi. 3: to confirm faith in the time of danger especially against the uncircumcised: and to be a sign of distinction and separation from the same uncircumcised Gentiles. These were the ends and uses of circumcision, which, notwithstanding infants could not possibly propound or have, were they therefore to be kept from it? So reasons this man against the baptism of infants: which followeth in the room of the other, as I have formerly proved. It is sufficient, that the infants of believers are capable of the manifestation of God's goodness towards them, in being baptized, as of old they were circumcised, according to the covenant. The other particular ends were and are to follow, and to be attained in their times. Where let it also be noted, that whereas, in the Lord's Supper there are required for the act of partaking, sundry works implying understanding, and knowledge in the partaker; as his being put in mind, that it is Christ's body and blood given for him: that, he take, eat, and drink it in remembrance of Christ's death: there is no such thing in the act of the administering of baptism: but only the person baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The same difference may be also observed to have been of old, between circumcision, and the eating of the passover, prohibited them who were not capable of the meaning of the mystery. Exod. xii. 26, 27.

That we "hold, and profess that Christians beget Christians," and "that only we" (whom he calls Brownists, page 172, because we are not Anabaptists) "beget infants that are heirs of salvation, and under the covenant of grace," is but his rash, and unhonest accusation of us.

All men know we hold the reformed churches, in all places, the true churches of Christ, and so within the Lord's covenant, the faithful parents with their seed. The like also we think of such in England in their persons, and seed with them, as are made partakers of the faith of Abraham. 2ndly, we hold, that our, as all other men's, children are, by natural generation, the children of wrath, Eph. ii. 3: and that it is by the grace of God, that we, and they with us, are within this the Lord's covenant, as was Abraham and his seed.

Against our doctrine, that baptism is a seal of the co-

Hosted by Google

venant of the gospel, he objecteth, that then washing with water is a seal in the flesh, and makes a print, or impression. I answer, noting in the first place, how he calls the very "outward washing with water, baptism," that, even that washing by God's appointment, is an outward seal, or sign of confirmation, of the New Testament in the blood of Christ; for that we mean by a "seal:" and to require a print, or impression, is but to quarrel about the word, or letter; when even circumcision itself, to speak properly, was no print. Where Christ teacheth, John vi. 27, that "the Father sealed him," doth he mean that he set any print upon his soul or body, or more than this, that he designed him to the office of the Mediator? Where the Lord bids the prophet "seal up the law among his disciples," would he have a print set in their flesh, or more, than that he should more fully declare, and confirm the law unto them? Isa. viii. 16. When Paul tells the Corinthians that they are the seal of his apostleship, doth he mean any more than that their conversion from paganism both by doctrine and signs and wonders of an apostle amongst them, was a confirmation thereof? 1 Cor. ix. 2; 2 Cor. xii. 11. So, since baptism is, by God's appointment, a declaration, and confirmation of the inward, and effectual washing by that blood and spirit of Christ, from the guilt, and contagion of sin, it is rightly, and truly called a seal, or sign of confirmation of Christ's testament established in his blood; as is also the Lord's Supper, of the breaking of his body, and shedding of his blood for our sins. And for this sealing, and confirming of Christ's testament in his blood those ordinances especially serve, and are by his servants to be used.

He tells us, that "in the new testament there is no seal, but the seal of the Spirit:" and quotes Eph. i. 17, and other scriptures speaking of that inward seal, and proving it, indeed; but not disproving the outward seals, but plainly establishing them. For if God's teaching of, and testifying unto us, inwardly, by his Spirit, that we are his in Christ, be an inward seal, then is his teaching of, and testifying unto us, the same thing outwardly, by the gospel, and sacraments, an outward seal, or seals, and so rightly called. And not only the spirit, which is inward, but water,

Hosted by Google

and blood, which are outward, do bear record of Christ, or confirm, and seal up his death unto us. 1 John v. 8. In respect of which water and blood issuing out of his side, our sacraments are said to have flown thence. John xix. 34. Lastly, Abraham, our father, when he believed, was also sealed by the Spirit of promise: and yet this hindered not, but that both he, and his seed had the outward seal of circumcision added; even so our good God, knowing how frail, and feeble in faith we are, hath to his gracious covenant, and promise in word, and writing, annexed, besides the inward seal of the Spirit, the outward seals, which we call sacraments, for the confirmation thereof, not in itself, but unto us: which we are therefore accordingly to use, with reverence, and thankfulness.

His assertion, that "infants are not in the covenant of the new testament, and therefore not under the seal," I have formerly disproved. If they be under the promise of salvation, they have a part, or legacy in the will, or testament of Christ, or new covenant, which are both one: and so in this seal of initiation, or entrance, baptism.

To his affirmation, that "parents cannot set the seal upon their infants now, as they could the seal of circumcision of old, upon theirs," I do answer, that they cannot indeed set the inward seal, no more could they then: but the outward they can now, as then they could: unto which God also setteth the inward in due time, as he hath promised, if they make not themselves unworthy thereof.

He objects in the last place against a ground in my book,* the former part whereof is this: "The Scriptures everywhere teach, that parents by their faith bring their children into the covenant of the church, and entitle them to the promises." This I proved from Gen. xviii. 7; Acts ii. 37; which proofs I have also confirmed against his unjust exceptions. He here objects further, page 176, that I "bring in a meritorious faith, where my faith is little enough to bring myself under the covenant of God, were it not for his merciful acceptance in Christ."

A vain, and ignorant collection: and by which the apostle teaching justification by faith, might, as truly, have been accused for bringing in a meritorious faith, &c. I do not, then, make faith a meritorious cause to deserve, but

* *Vide* vol. ii. pages 296, 297.

Hosted by Google

an instrumental means, or hand, as it were, to receive God's gracious promises in Christ to the faithful, and their seed: as Abraham when God promised him to be "his God, and the God of his seed," did by faith lay hold of, and receive this promise, and so interested himself and his in it, and the seal thereof: which promise had he not believed, he had visibly, or before men, deprived himself and his of all interest in it. The same I judge of all other faithful parents, leaving merit to free-willers, who hold particular election to arise from faith foreseen: and, as this man affirmed unto me and others, that if God showed to him any more favour, or mercy, than to the profanest man in the world, it were partiality in him.

He adds, page 177, that "Abraham's faith and earnest prayer could not bring Ishmael his child of thirteen years old, nor his other children by Keturah, under the covenant." Gen. xvii. 18, 21. Where meaning, as he must, the covenant of circumcision, he overthrows one error, as he that interferes, strikes down one ill leg, by another. For, 1. Since Ishmael, and the children by Keturah, were circumcised, and yet had no promise of the land of Canaan, his main foundation, which is, that "God in the covenant of circumcision, promised nothing on his part, but the land of Canaan," is raised, and so all falls, which he builds upon it. 2. Since the covenant there spoken of was the covenant of circumcision, and that Ishmael with the rest were circumcised, how saith he, that he and they were not in the covenant, to wit outwardly? Besides the Lord tells Abraham, ver. 20, that he had heard his prayer touching Ishmael: though he meant to establish his covenant with Isaac, as the root; of which both the church, and promised seed should come, and unto whom Ishmael, with the rest, should have submitted, and adjoined himself; whom because he despised, and in him Christ, he was cut off from the church and covenant afterwards. Which things till they were revealed made no difference between Isaac and Ishmael: neither can the like difference in God's secret knowledge, or purpose, till the time of revelation, exclude one of the children of the faithful now, more than another.

Of Acts ii. 39, I have spoken formerly, and therefore come to the latter part of the ground, which he putteth

Hosted by Google

down thus, page 178. "God takes occasion by the sins of parents to execute his justice to condemnation, upon the children." "Where," saith he, "I double my sin, in that as before I made the parent's faith the cause of blessing to salvation, so here, their infidelity a cause of God's judgment to condemnation, to their children." Where the truth is, he both doubleth, and trebleth injury upon me, and just blame upon himself. For first, I neither mention, nor meddle with either the salvation, or condemnation of infants, though he falsify my words, as if I did: our question being only about the outward, or visible covenant of the church, and privileges thereof: secret things being left to God, as I there expressly speak, alleging Deut. xxix. 29, for that purpose. Secondly, As I make not the faith of parents a cause meritorious, as he imagineth, of that good unto their children, but only a means of embracing God's gracious offer, and promise: so neither do I write, as he challengeth me, that the father's infidelity is a cause of the children's damnation, but an occasion, which God useth for the execution of his justice upon the children, being by nature the children of wrath. That then, which I have written,* and do avouch, is, that God ordinarily includeth in the parents, the infants, as branches in the root, either for blessings, or judgments visibly, or in respect of men, reserving to himself, the secret dispensation of things, according to the tenor either of his mercy or justice. That the children of the faithful are with their parents in the visible covenant of God's love, I have at large proved by the Scriptures, and might allege for that purpose many more, Deut. iv. 37; Psa. xxxvii. 25, 26: and those not figurative, and shadowish, but containing in them promises of eternal truth: howsoever these men can have no more comfort in those promises for their children, than if they were the children of Turks and Pagans.

The other part touching the administration of God's justice I proved in my book† by sundry scriptures: which because he passeth by, as unseen, I will here insert, as there I wrote, word for word. "Cain going out from the presence of the Lord, carried his posterity with him; so

* *Vide* vol. ii. pages 296, 297.

† Ibid.

Hosted by Google

did Ishmael and Esau theirs, the Ishmaelites and Edomites. "And if the Lord disclaim the mother for an harlot, not reputing her his wife, he accounts the children no better than bastards, on whom he will have no pity." Gen. iv. 16; vi. 2; Hos. ii. 2. And if the children of the Jews be not broken off with their parents, for their unbelief, they are successively within the Lord's covenant, every one of them to this day. To the same purpose we may consider how in the drowning of the old world: the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah: the plaguing of Egypt, especially in the death of the first-born: the swallowing up of Dathan and Abiram: the stoning of Achan: the destruction of the Canaanites and Amalekites: the rooting out of Eli's, Jeroboam's, and Baashan's families, how I say in all these, and many more, though most grievous, yet most just judgments of God, the children were enwrapped in their fathers' judgments: drowned, burned, swallowed up by the earth, and otherwise destroyed with them. Gen. vi. 7; xix. 24, 25; 1 Pet. iii. 20, 21; 2 Pet. ii. 6; Exod. xi. 5; xii. 29; Numb. xvi. 27, 32; Josh. vii. 24, 25. With which examples join the testimony of Job, v. 3, 4, "The habitation of the fool is cursed: his children are far from safety: they are crushed in the gates, and there is no rescue:" and that of David, Psa. xxi. 10, "The Lord will destroy the fruit of his enemies from the earth, and their seed from among the children of men:" and again, Psa. xxxvii. 28, "The seed of the wicked shall be cut off." Yea, what need we seek further for this dispensation, than David himself, though a godly man, because of whose sin, the child born in adultery died the death. 2 Sam. xii. 14, 18. What reason, then, this man had in his blind zeal thus to revile this doctrine, "as a doctrine of devils," and me, for it as "a false prophet," let all wise men judge.

But, saith he, "I propound this doctrine for a general rule." I do, for the ordinary course of God's justice of which we speak. Which notwithstanding hinders not, but that his extraordinary mercy may, and doth oft, and much, rejoice against his judgment. But let us see, what he objecteth. 1. That Abijah the son of wicked Jeroboam, though young, yet was not cursed for his father's sin, 1 Kings xiv. First, I speak nowhere of any such cursing, as he casts

Hosted by Google

out. 2. Abijah was not so young but he disliked his father's courses: and "had good found in him towards the Lord," ver. 13. 3. It is evident, ver. 10, that the Lord punished his father's sin, in his death, ver. 11. That in Ezek. xviii. 14, 17, is impertinent, being spoken of a son forsaking his father's sin, and doing the contrary; with whom the Lord doth not deal in the course of his justice, but of his mercy. So for Josiah, at eight years old, he forsook the wicked ways of his father Ammon, "and sought after the God of his father David." 2 Chron. xxxiv. 1—3. And yet even for him, it appears in the Scriptures, that the Lord in giving him into the hands of the king of Egypt, had respect to the sins of Judah, and so of his father, amongst and above the rest. In his last example, he affirmeth untruly, that the Lord did not punish the people of Israel's children for their great transgression, Numb. xiv. 26, 27, &c. It is expressly affirmed, ver. 33, that their "children should wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear their whoredoms:" though respecting their forefathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and his promise to them, he brought the most of them into the land of Canaan, at the last: which Mr. Helwisse grants to have been God's mercy, and therein, that in his justice he might have taken them away also. And so, ver. 12, the Lord plainly showeth, that his justice moved him to the destroying of them altogether, save that his singular mercy did rejoice against judgment. And so this instance is clear against himself.

Where he further confesseth with me, that all are by nature, children of wrath, conceived, and born in sin; and then demands, page 178, whether I hold not all children alike children of wrath: or that some parents confer grace by generation, more than others; or if not, which he assures himself we will confess, how I can prove, that God should execute his justice to condemnation upon some children, for the sins of their parents, and show mercy upon others, for the faith of their parents, seeing God hath said, that every one shall receive salvation, or condemnation, according to that, which he hath done in the flesh, and not according to that his parents have done, I answer sundry things.

Hosted by Google

And, first, as before, that I do not say that infants are saved or condemned for the faith or sins of their parents, as he most untruly accuseth me. The infants saved, are saved by the grace of God in Christ; which their faithful parents also believe, according to God's promise, "I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed." Those that perish, (though I desire, if such were the will of God, and so could gladly believe, if the Scriptures taught it, that all were saved) do perish for that original guilt and corruption, wherein they are conceived and born, being "the children of wrath by nature," and therein liable to God's curse every way. But for that parents are, in a sort, in their children, and so punished in their punishments, their sins also may and do concur as con-causes, or causes with other of God's judgments: both the Scriptures and reason teaching, that many causes may meet together in one effect. Yet it must be here and always remembered, that our question is not about the peremptory salvation or condemnation of any, but about their admission or non-admission into the visible church. And strange it is for this man to make it all one to be saved and to be of the visible church; and to be condemned, and to be out of it, specially for children; since he will have them all saved, and yet none of them at all to be of the church. Secondly, If he were assured, as he saith, that we would "confess that no parents do confer grace by generation more than others," I am assured he showed the less grace in accusing us in another place, page 172, against his conscience, to hold, "that Christians beget Christians by generation." Thirdly, Since all are by nature alike children of wrath, I would know of these free-willers, how some, become the children of God and believers, and some, abide under the wrath of God? To make the things or persons, which are altogether alike in themselves, unlike, there must come something from elsewhere, and that not alike, unto them both. For either let them alone which are alike, or add alike unto them both, and they will remain alike still. It must not then be any universal grace alike common to all, which makes them who are alike to become unlike one to another.

Mr. Helwisse, elsewhere and rightly, disclaims all free-

Hosted by Google

will, or power in a man's self to work out his salvation, but teacheth, that "this grace, which is his mercy in Christ, God hath given to all, though all receive it not;" for which he quotes Phil. i. 10, 11; Acts vii. 51; xiii. 46. Where first he lays a notorious error for his foundation, in making all and every person in the world partakers of the grace of God in Christ. For they to whom God gives grace in Christ, must themselves be in Christ; and so all the unbelievers and wicked in the world should be in Christ, which is expressly contrary to the Scriptures. Rom. viii. 1; Gal. v. 24; Eph. ii. 12; John iii. 3. So that wicked and unregenerate men have neither power in themselves nor in Christ (in whom they are not), to work out their salvation. They, indeed, who are in Christ by faith, and have received his spirit, are thereby enabled to work out their salvation; which Phil. i. 10, 11, proveth; as the rest also are able and have power to despise and reject the grace of God offered to condemnation, and this the other two scriptures, Acts vii. 51, and xiii. 46, do prove. Which yet a great part of the wicked in the world do not; as not having so much as heard of Christ, at least in any competent measure for salvation by him; but shall be judged according to the law of nature, written in the creatures, and in their natural consciences. Rom. ii. 12. Again, he speaks contradictions in saying, that all have this grace or power in Christ, and that God giveth it to all, and yet confessing that all receive it not. For though there may be a purpose, will, and offer to give, yet there can be no giving so as the person have the thing, especially that thing which none can have against his will, as none can have grace, except there be also a receiving. Since, then, all men are not in Christ, and so not partakers of the grace of God in him; nor yet, if they were, could a common, universal, and equal grace make them unequal who were formerly equal, it followeth that there is a special and peculiar grace, which God in Christ giveth unto some, and not to others; by which they are enabled to understand and believe the gospel, and to repent; and so by consequence, a special and particular election of those persons before the world, since God's works are known unto him of old, Acts xv. 18; neither doth he anything in time, hich he did not purpose to do before time.

Hosted by Google

Lastly, Since all children are by nature children of, or subject to, wrath, and which God might in justice destroy, why should it seem harsh unto these men, that he should execute his justice upon some, and show mercy upon others, and save them? If he might in justice have condemned all, (which they must needs grant, if they believe that all are "by nature the children of wrath," and that God gave his Son in his mercy, and that it had been no injustice if he had given him for none, no more than he did for the angels that sinned,) will they sue God at the law, because he hath not given him effectually for all, or saved all by him? Will they have him give them account why he takes some into the arm of his mercy, when he might have left all to the hand of his justice? If he condemn any, they have their due: those whom he saveth, he doth it of free mercy, unto which he is not bound. And is any man's eye evil, because his is good? or because men know no reason why God should rather choose and save some than others, all deserving condemnation, will they yield him to be no more wise, and no more holy than they? "The depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, and the unsearchableness of his judgments" appears in this, if in any other thing; as doth also man's intolerable presumption, who will yield him no more than he sees reason for.

Now though I have done it fully before, yet will I further clear by the Scriptures, that, though all children are by nature alike, yet in respect of the grace of adoption, they are not alike, especially unto us, and in that judgment, which we are to pass upon them, leaving unto the Lord his secrets.

And 1. Who will say, that Isaac, being separated from the infants of the heathen into the covenant of God's love, and so signed, as one of the Lord's peculiar people; and those infants of the world, from whom he was separated, for example, the infants of the Sodomites, about his time, who were in God's fierce wrath destroyed with fire, and brimstone from heaven, were alike in God's acceptance? We have Isaac set forth as an example of God's mercy, and love: and them, with their parents, of his justice, and vengeance. Jude 7. And who will say that the Israelitish children received into solemn covenant by and with the

Hosted by Google

Lord, Neh. x. 28, 29, and the children of the heathenish women, which were shut out with their mothers, and separated, before the other could enter it, were to be accounted alike acceptable? Neh. ix. 2. The Prophet Malachi testifieth for the Lord that he "loved Jacob, and hated Esau" (to wit in the decree of his love, and hatred, by just means to be applied), "before they were born:" and this the apostle, Rom. ix., applieth to the question of election, and reprobation, touching the two parties, primarily, and distinctly; and their posterity, secondarily, and indefinitely, both for persons, and things. And lest any should say, that God thus decreed, in respect of anything, which he foresaw they would do, or prove, the apostle prevents this shift, and shows that this was not in respect of works, but that the purpose of God might stand, according to election, ver. 11. Besides had this been primarily in respect of faith, or works foreseen, and for that the one would receive the grace of God, and not the other, the apostle needed not to have broken out as he did, speaking of the reason of this his love, or hatred. "But what art thou, O man, who pleadest with God," &c. ver. 20. The answer had been easy for a child to have given, namely, that the reason why God purposed to love Jacob was because he foresaw he would receive of himself the grace to be offered, and believe: and so to hate Esau for his sin in not receiving the same grace to be offered as effectually on God's part, as unto his brother.

It is also noted of John the Baptist, that he was "filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb," Luke i. 15: which to affirm of all children were a vanity not worthy the refuting. Lastly, Christ our Saviour blessed the infants of the Israelites, being of the church, when they were brought unto him, Matt. xix. 13—15: but with the little daughter of the Canaanitish woman he refused to communicate his grace, accounting her as a dog, or whelp, till her mother by her faithful, and zealous confession, had obtained for her, interest in the children's bread. Matt. xv. 22. And thus it appeareth, besides the things formerly laid down, that though all children be alike in nature, yet are they not all alike in respect of God's adoption, especially outwardly manifested, of which we speak.

Hosted by Google

He adds, that "every one shall receive salvation, or condemnation according to that which he hath done in the flesh," &c. And for answer, I would know of him, how any infants, so dying, who have done neither good, nor evil, shall either be saved, or damned? He must answer, that the Scriptures he brings concern not infants at all, but men of years; and, therefore, are, by him, misapplied to them, whom they nothing concern.

And here note, that as the church in heaven, or of glory, and this in earth, or of grace, is one in substance; this, the beginning of that, and that the consummation of this, so they, who come into the church here, must enter by the profession, which themselves make: and they that come into the church there, by the profession, which Christ shall make of, and for them, according to their works. Matt. xxv. But as it were absurd to say, that infants cannot enter into the church and state of glory, because Christ cannot profess of them, that they have "fed the hungry," &c.: so is it as absurd to exclude them from the church or state of grace, because they cannot themselves make profession of faith, and repentance. This man by one, and the same error, which is the perverting, and misapplying of the Scriptures to infants, which are peculiar to men of years, debars them of both.

These things considered, I hope it will appear to the godly, and wise reader, that the things for which he challengeth me in this, as in other points, are only false, wherein they are, by him, falsified. Yea and if there were nothing else, two of the three last scriptures, which he brings against me, do undeniably prove as much as, yea, more than, I speak: which is, that wicked parents do enwrap their children in the same evils visibly (for so I speak), with themselves, adding in the same place, that "this is not so, as though the children were without fault, but as being by Adam's transgression, and their natural, and original corruption children of wrath, and liable to all God's curses, which he also takes occasion by the sins of the parents to execute upon the children, in whose punishments he also punisheth the parents themselves after a sort." The former scripture is Rom. v. 14, which proves by his own exposition, that all infants are by the sin of their common

Hosted by Google

father Adam, under the reign or tyranny of death: the guilt, and contagion of which sin is, by their next parents immediately conveyed unto them by natural generation. And that God hath usually punished the sins, even of the next parents, both in the death of their children and otherwise, is so evident in the Scriptures, as that no modest man will gainsay it. Yea, even for them of years, that other scripture which he brings, Exod. xx. 5, teacheth plainly, that "the Lord visits" not only their own "sins, who hate him, upon them," but the "sins of their fathers" also. That in Ezek. xviii. 14, 17, as before I have answered, is not of an infant, but of a child of years, "forsaking his father's sins," and doing the contrary: with whom therefore the Lord deals not in the course of his justice, but of his mercy: and so is not pertinent to the question in hand: which is about infants, and those such as with whom the Lord deals in the course, and tenor of his justice.

And thus have I answered all the particulars in his book, which either respect mine own writings, or our special cause, and practice. My purpose also was to have showed, how, whilst he pretends "the discovery of the mystery of iniquity," himself is deep plunged in many points of popish iniquity. But for that I have drawn out the thread of mine answer further than I intended; and that most of the particulars will come, for substance, under consideration, in the "Survey of Mr. Smyth's Confession," in the following chapters, I will here conclude for the matter of his writing: adding especially for the manner thereof, only thus much; that in him, and some others I have had great cause to observe, and bewail, in a special regard, man's misery, in lying open to this, amongst other, of Satan's dangerous practices: which is, when men have escaped his snares of gross ignorance, and profaneness, and are come to some measure of knowledge, and conscience of godliness, and have suffered something for the truth, than to bring them into love with themselves, and their own knowledge, zeal, and other graces: and withal into the contempt of the knowledge, judgment, zeal, and graces of all other men: that, so soaring aloft upon the wings of vain presumption, and beholding all others afar off, and as scarce creeping upon the earth, whilst they mount on high, they might fall by rising, and that their fall might be

Hosted by Google

great. But let all God's people be exhorted, and admonished to serve him in modesty of mind, and meekness of wisdom, with reverence, and fear: avoiding, as the sands of humble hypocrisy, in pinning their faith and obedience upon the sleeves of others, so much more the rock of proud presumption: which is so much the worse than the other, as it is more dangerous for any to overvalue himself, than another man. James iii. 13; Heb. xii. 28; Col. ii. 18.

CHAPTER VI.

A SURVEY OF THE CONFESSION OF FAITH PUBLISHED IN CERTAIN CONCLUSIONS BY THE REMAINDERS OF MR. SMYTH'S COMPANY AFTER HIS DEATH.*

In honour of the truth, and love of them, who unfeignedly seek it, and more especially of the persons, under whose names this confession passeth out, I have thought myself even called to examine, and censure by the Word of God, such errors, as by the light thereof, I do discern in it, as also in the other writing annexed unto it: purposing herein to pass by (as approving it) what I find agreeable to the Scriptures, albeit not set down in so convenient terms: to explain, and clear what may seem doubtful, and so to evince by the same Scriptures, what I deem contrary to the wholesome doctrine of godliness and form thereof. In all which I desire my endeavours may so far be blessed of God, and accepted of men, as they contain in them his simple truth, and proceed from him, who entirely loveth all that seek the same truth in holiness.

SECT. I.—ON KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

And first, the 7th conclusion which is, "That to understand and conceive of God in the mind, is not the saving knowledge of God; but to be like to God in his effects and properties, to be made conformable to his Divine and heavenly attributes, this is the true saving knowledge of

* "A Declaration of the Faith of the English People remaining at Amsterdam, in Holland," 1611, supposed to have been written by Mr. Helwisse, in behalf of himself and the surviving members of Mr. Smyth's church, of which he became pastor. *Vide* Crosby's History of the Baptists, vol. ii., Appendix,

Hosted by Google

God, 2 Cor. iii. 18; Matt. v. 48; 2 Pet. i. 4; whereunto we ought to give all diligence," stands need of explanation. For taking the former part of the sentence either exclusively, that salvation stands not in these things alone, or comparatively, that it stands not therein principally, according to that form of speech, Rom. i. 19; 1 Cor. i. 17; it is true, and the scriptures brought do prove it: but not so, if the words be taken negatively, as though it stood not in these things at all. For "without faith," which is wrought in the mind and understanding, "no man can please God:" nor come unto him. Heb. xi. 6. "And this," saith Christ, "is eternal life to know God the Father," John xvii. 3, &c., and everywhere the Scriptures teach, that by faith Christ is received, and salvation obtained, John i. 12; Rom. iii. 28: as is also that renewing of God's image in us, first, in the understanding, in which we are first joined to God by true knowledge, Col. iii. 10; and secondly, in our heart by sincere love: and so after in the other affections, and parts of soul and body.

SECT. II.—ON GOD'S DECREES ABOUT SIN.

The 9th position, where it is said "that God, before the foundation of the world did foresee, and determine the issue and event of all his works," Acts xv. 18, cometh much short of the truth, though there be no untruth in it. For God hath not only foreseen, and determined the issues, and events of his works, but hath also decreed and purposed the works themselves before the foundation of the world. And so much the place in the Acts proveth: where James teaching that "all the works of God are known unto him from eternity," purposeth to prove that the calling of the Gentiles, of which work he speaks, is not a thing newly come into the thoughts of God, but that which he hath promised, and purposed before. Which the other place also after alleged plainly proves: where it is said, that God "worketh all things according to the counsel of his will." Eph. i. 11. And to conceive that God doth anything, in time, which he did not, from eternity purpose to do, as he doth it, is derogatory to his infinite wisdom and power: and, indeed, to deny him to be God, and to make him finite: in whom there is a change

Hosted by Google

wrought, and a beginning, and growth of counsels. And this I note for two purposes. First, that we may know that the condemnation of wicked men by God, for sin, by their free will to be wrought, was purposed of God before the world: it being a good work of God, and effected by his infinite power for the holiness, and glory of his justice: 2ndly, that since "every good giving, and every perfect gift is from above, descending from the Father of lights," James i. 17, and that, to know God, to believe in him, to love, and obey him, to receive Christ, and the gospel of salvation offered, are the good gifts of God, we may also know, that God not only foresees, that those graces will be in men, but also fore-purposes, from eternity, himself to work and effect them: that if any should tell us, as many do, that God hath indeed predestinated such men unto salvation, as he foresaw would believe in Christ, and receive the grace in him offered, we may answer them, that God foresees indeed those graces in those men, but it is because he fore-purposeth to work them. He works them, in time, because, of his free grace, he purposed to work them before time was: without which, his purpose, he could not have foreseen them. And as the Lord in the beginning "saw" that the things "he had made were all good" when he had made them such: so did he foresee all other good graces in men, because he fore-purposed so to work and effect them.

The beginning and end of the tenth position: viz. "That God is not the author, or worker of sin: and that he gives no influence, instinct, motion, or inclination to the least sin," I embrace. But the middle part thereof, viz: that God only did foresee, and determine what evil the free will of men, and angels would do, I except against, as derogatory to the infiniteness of God's power, and wisdom: neither indeed is it sensible to say, that God determined, what the will of others would do.

But what the forethoughts and purposes of God have been from eternity about sin, so far as the knowledge thereof concerneth us, will best appear, if we consider, what the work of his providence is, in and about it, in time, and when it is wrought by men or angels.

And, first, since sin is the work of men and angels, it

Hosted by Google

followeth that sin is from them, who are themselves from God: though the sin be not, but of themselves: yea, not only the natures and persons, but even the natural powers, faculties, and instruments together with their natural motions and actions, in and by which sin is wrought, are of God also; by him sustained, and upheld, and acted by His almighty power, which is the cause of every creature, and upholdeth all things, and so of every action, as an action, Acts xvii. 28; Rom. xi. 36; Col. i. 17; Heb. i. 3; sin not being created of God, nor any part or power of man, or angel, nor any motion or action, but only the depravation, corruption, crooked and inordinate abuse and application of the same created part, power, or motion. For example: the very power, and use of seeing the forbidden fruit, the natural desire of it, as a pleasant thing, the power and ability of taking, as also of eating it, were of God in themselves: but the sin stood in the inordinateness and abuse of the sense, appetite, and power upon that, which was forbidden by God. And this will yet appear more plainly, if we consider that the very same sense, appetite, and work both of body, and mind set upon another fruit not forbidden by God, had been no sin at all.

Secondly, God doth administer the occasions, by which the creature through his own default, is provoked, and incited unto sin: as in the creation of the forbidden fruit "very pleasant to the eyes," and of "the serpent subtle," and fit to be used by Satan for temptation. Gen. iii. Thus even the law of God is the occasion of all lust, and sin, Rom. vii. 8; the gospel of fire, and sword, and all variance, and debate. Matt. x. 34, 35: Luke xii. 49. Thus God's commandment to Pharaoh to let his people go, the miracles which Moses did in his sight, his conviction of conscience, and remorse of heart, which by them the Lord wrought in him, were occasions of sin unto him, by his own rebellion, and God's judgment: and did harden his heart, and God by them, not as by causes, but occasions, which are also used of God, as all other the like occasions, to all men, for the trial, discovery, and conviction of his creature, and to make way for his own further work of mercy, or justice. Exod. viii. 5.

Thirdly, God doth permit, and suffer sin, and that, both

Hosted by Google

willingly and wisely, not by giving the creature leave to sin, for that is impossible; but by not putting the effectual impediments which might hinder sin, as he both could and lawfully might, if he would. He could and might, had he so pleased, not have created men and angels, which have sinned: or by irresistible grace, restraint, or other disappointment have prevented their sin. He, therefore, permitteth it willingly, and when he could hinder it, if he would; otherwise it were no permission, though he did not hinder it; no more than a man can be said to permit, or suffer the sun to shine, or rain to fall, that hinders them not. And thus sin, though it be always against the decrees of the commanding, approving, and effecting will of God, yet is not at all against his permitting will, or against that decree of manifestation of that one in itself, and simple will of God: neither is it wrought, he absolutely nilling it. For he being in heaven doth whatsoever he pleaseth. Psa. cxv. 3. "His counsel shall stand, and he will do whatsoever he will," saith the prophet. Isa. xlvi. 10. This sin he doth also suffer, not, as men oft suffer things to come to pass, without care or consideration of it, but of purpose and with infinite wisdom, as knowing how to bring light out of darkness, and by the creature's sin, to effect his most holy work, according to his unsearchable counsel: the depth whereof may swallow up the mind, but cannot be sounded by it, and in the meditation whereof, the best bound, and bottom is for man to consider and confess, that God is both more wise, and more holy than he.

And so in the fourth place, God doth most wisely, and most powerfully determine, order, and direct the sins of men, and angels, in respect of the continuance, extent and use thereof by him to be made: bringing light out of darkness, by his almighty power, and wisdom: and effecting by the creature's unrighteousness his own most holy, and righteous purposes. And thus he sometimes punisheth one sin with another, in the same persons, giving them over to reprobate minds, for holding his truth in unrighteousness: sending upon them the efficacy of delusion to believe lies, that they might be damned, who have not received the love of the truth, that they might be saved: searing with an hot iron their consciences, who have

Hosted by Google

spoken lies in hypocrisy, and punishing the neglect of former conviction, with want of feeling, and numbness of heart afterwards, Rom. i. 28, 29; 2 Thess. ii. 10: and sometimes the sin of one man by the sin of another: and thus he punished David's adultery and murder, by Absalom's treason and incest, 2 Sam. xi., xii., xv., xvi., xviii.: and the Israelites' idolatries, and other iniquities, by the pride and cruelty of the Assyrians, and Babylonians. 2 Kings xvii., xxiv., xxv. Sometimes also he useth, or rather abuseth, the sins of wicked angels and men, for the trial of the faith and patience of his servants, as we see in the story of Job: and sometimes to make way for his own most excellent works; as the redemption of mankind by the death of his Son, for which he used the envy of the Pharisees, the malice of Satan, the treason of Judas, and the injustice of Pontius Pilate. And in this ordination of evil, God giveth us to see, that nothing is absolutely, and infinitely evil, as he is absolutely and infinitely good; who also, in these ordinations, triumpheth over sin and iniquity: which he surely would never suffer, save as he is able to serve his most holy purpose of it, and of them that work it: and, in this respect, especially, God is said to do these things, which indeed are done by wicked angels and men, and by him ordered, and determined to his most holy purposes.

And lastly, God doth either mercifully pardon, and so abolish in Christ, or punish in the course of justice, sin, and sinners, as the Scriptures everywhere teach.

And by these the works of God in and about sin, it appeareth what the purposes of God were touching it from eternity: for whatsoever God doth, in time, whether about sin, or otherwise, that he purposed to do, before time, ere the world was: and so for the contrary.

SECTION III.—ON ADAM'S FALL AND SIN.

The sixteenth Conclusion: "That Adam died the same day that he sinned, Gen. ii. 17, for that the reward of sin is death, Rom. vi. 23, and that his death was loss of innocency, peace of conscience, and of the comfortable presence of God," Gen. iii. 7—11, must be further opened and better cleared than, I suppose, the author intendeth it.

For by death threatened, Gen. ii. 17, is not only meant

Hosted by Google

spiritual death standing in loss of innocency, peace of conscience, and God's comfortable presence, but, withal, eternal death, whereof the other is but the beginning: as one of the noted scriptures proveth. "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord," Rom. vi. 23; where the apostle opposeth unto death, eternal life, and therefore intendeth eternal death of soul and body. In which death threatened was included bodily death also, with all the means, and miseries, which lead unto it. And this appears in the last scripture alleged, which is Gen. iii. 16, 19, where God, after many bodily calamities both upon the woman and man for that sin, denounceth, as their end, and consummation, death and dissolution of body into the earth from which they were taken.

It is true, that the body being made of corruptible creatures, was subject, in itself, to corruption, and mortality: yet must it be remembered, that even the heavens themselves were made of one and the same first common matter, that rude lump and unformed chaos, and so are, also, in themselves subject to dissolution. Gen. i. 1, 2. Yea, whatsoever, hath a beginning, and is a creature, is subject to come to an end naturally: as with which is communicated but a finite power and virtue; and so the very souls of men, and the angels are in themselves subject to death, and mortality, save as they are by the continual influence of the Divine power and providence, sustained and preserved. But God now having ennobled the whole man soul and body with His image and joined them together in one person: the soul to inform, and quicken the body, and the body to be quickened, and used by it, as an active, and lively instrument for her operations, and works: the separation of these two, which death is, being a dissolution of so great a work of God, and of the habitation of his own image, could not come, but by sin. Not that I think Adam should always have continued in that his natural estate, in tilling, and keeping the garden of Eden, in eating, drinking, procreating of children, governing the family, and the like: or should always have had an earthly, heavy, gross, and dark body, but that, in the Lord's appointed time, there should have been a change of all those earthly imperfections, as there shall be in the bodies of all

Hosted by Google

the faithful, who shall be alive at Christ's second coming, 1 Cor. xv. 51; 1 Thess. iv. 17: but the same without all grief and pain; much more without all separation of soul and body: most of all, without the bodies corrupting and rotting in the grave: which are the proper fruits of sin. And, therefore, as God gave him "a living soul," so he gave him "the tree of life in the garden," as an effectual sacrament of life: he made all things good in themselves, and for him: subject unto him, and serviceable to his use. So that though his body were, in itself, capable of violence by fire, water, and otherwise, yet should the providence of God, the ministry of angels, and his own perfect wisdom so have directed, and ordered both them, and himself, as that no hurt, but good every way should have come unto him, by them.

"Wherefore," saith the prophet, "doth the living man complain?" he answereth, man complaineth for his sins: Lam. iii. 39. So that all the sorrows of this life, all the grievous pangs and passions of the mind, all the turmoilings of the body, by hunger, thirst, wearisomeness, sickness, diseases, and so death unto which they lead, and which is the extremity of them all, are for sin, inflicted by God, and by man borne; which the Scriptures everywhere testify, and that, in examples so well known, as in vain it were to trouble the reader with noting them down.

To conclude: The apostle, Rom. v. 12, 14, speaking of bodily death, affirmeth expressly that for sin, it reigned even before the law was given by Moses, and that, over them who had not sinned as Adam, that is actually: and more plainly, 1 Cor. xv. 21—26, where speaking of the bodily resurrection, after bodily death, he teacheth, that by man and in Adam, all die: and that even this bodily death is one of Christ's enemies to be destroyed at the last: which these men themselves do also confess, though they observe it not, (Conclusion 34,) and that death and the grave are vanquished by Christ upon the cross. And since Christ suffered nothing but for our sins, if bodily death had not been a punishment of sin, why should Christ have suffered it, as he did, and that for our sins, according to the Scriptures? 1 Cor. xv. 3. But it will

Hosted by Google

here be demanded, if God threatened bodily death upon Adam, the day he sinned, why he did not accordingly execute it? I answer that the threatening was legal, and according to the course of justice, and, therefore, did not hinder but God in mercy might find a remedy, as he also did: and so the Lord's meaning was no more, but that in the day wherein Adam ate, he should be subject to, and guilty of death, and the curse of God. In the very same form of speech, Solomon threateneth Shimei, that the day he went out of Jerusalem any whither, he should surely die, 1 Kings ii. 37: that is, be guilty of death: for neither did, neither almost possibly could, he actually kill him that very day. The truth, then is, that God threatened not only spiritual, and eternal death, which is the consummation of the former, but bodily also, and with it, all bodily, and temporary calamities leading unto it. And of this, it is most needful, the servants of God should be firmly persuaded, and continually mindful, that in their sorrows both of life, and death, they might be led to the remembrance of their sins, and for them be humbled under the hand of God, of which fruit of their afflictions these men's doctrine bereaveth them. 1 Kings xvii. 18; 1 Cor. xi. 29, 30.

The 17th conclusion: "That Adam being fallen did not lose any natural power, or faculty, which God created in his soul, because the work of the devil, which is sin, cannot abolish God's works, and creatures: and, therefore, being fallen, he still retained freedom of will, Gen. iii. 23, 24," is in part doubtfully set down, and in part, untrue.

That Adam had, as well, freedom of will after, as before his fall, is as true as that he was a man after, as before. For take away will from a man, and he ceaseth to be a man: and take away freedom from the will, in that which it willeth, and it ceaseth to be will. But here is the difference, that the same natural power of free will, which before, was rightly ordered, and disposed only to good actually, though changeably, was afterwards corrupted, disordered, and clean contrarily disposed, till by supernatural grace, it was rectified and renewed. It is true, then, that sin destroyeth not the natural powers, or parts

Hosted by Google

of soul, or body, but only corrupteth, infecteth, and disordereth them: whence also ariseth in the mind, ignorance, error, doubtings, and unbelief; and in the will, and affections, perverseness, and disorder, with manifold lusts, to the fulfilling and execution whereof, the bodily instruments are disposed. But the reason brought, "that sin cannot abolish God's work, or creatures," is frivolous: for God suffering sin to enter, suffereth, therein, an abolition of his own work and creature. It is confessed, Proposition 11: "That Adam sinning, died the death, and lost innocency, peace of conscience, and the comfortable presence of God." Now, was not this spiritual death which Adam died, an abolition, and destruction of his spiritual life, innocency, &c. works of God, and his creatures? the same may be said of the whole image of God. What were these, but works of God, creatures, and created graces, and endowments, wrought in him, and bestowed on him by the hand of the Creator, which sin abolished both in him, and in his posterity by natural propagation? as will appear in the refutation of the 18th Conclusion, which is,

SECTION IV.—ON ORIGINAL SIN.

"That original sin is an idle term, and that there is no such thing as men intend by the word, Ezek. xviii. 20. Because God threatened death only to Adam, Gen. ii. 17, not to his posterity, and because God created the soul. Heb. xii. 9."

That original sin is an hereditary evil, I shall prove hereafter, God assisting, and do answer to the Scriptures; and first to that in Ezekiel, "The soul that sinneth shall die; the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father." The prophet speaks of such children as forsake sin, and repent, as the whole context showeth, which was to reprove the hypocrisy of the Jews, who complained of injustice from God in punishing them, who are holy, for their fathers' sins. Besides, all Adam's natural posterity were souls sinning in him; whom, in that his sin, we must not consider as a private person, but as the common father of mankind, communicating with the nature, the sin, which was not merely personal, but natural, with his

Hosted by Google

natural posterity: both which are also their own; as, on the contrary, the second Adam, Christ, and his righteousness are so communicated with the members of his body, as every faithful person may truly say, that both he, and it are his. And, hence, was it, that in the punishment of this sin, the earth was cursed, not to him alone, but to his ensuing posterity: neither was Eve alone to suffer the sorrows of conception, and childbirth, but all her daughters after her: neither were the cherubims set to keep them two alone, but all their after posterity out of the garden of Eden: and so is it for death itself, and all the passages which lead unto it: according to that of the apostle, "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, even so death went over all men, in whom all have sinned," Rom. v. 12. Where they further allege, "that because God created the soul," that is, doth immediately create the soul of every particular person, Heb. xii. 9, "there is therefore no original sin," they take too much liberty, both for the exposition of the scripture, and their inference upon it, showing no reason for the one or other.

First then, by σαρκος, flesh, Heb. xii. 9, for so it should be turned, and not bodies, is not meant the bodies of men without souls, which the parents do not correct, that is correct with instruction, as the word παιδευτὰς, signifieth: nor by spirits, souls without bodies, since God is the father of the bodies of men, and of all creatures, Job xxxviii. 28; Luke iii. 38; but, as by flesh is oft, in the Scriptures, meant earthly things, for which our natural parents train us up, and correct us, and as God is our spiritual master, and guide, so the meaning may well be, that if, for the conveniency of this life, we submit to the chastisement of our earthly father, much more ought we to humble ourselves to the discipline of our heavenly Father, for spiritual things. Secondly, Since they, generally, who think the soul to be created immediately, and infused, do not only hold original sin, but also show how they conceive it to be propagated, it is but presumption in these men, without answering what others so ordinary bring to the contrary, thus to conclude, that, because the soul is thus immediately created, therefore, there is no

Hosted by Google

original sin. But as I see small reason to persuade me, that the dead body, before the soul be united with it, can be the proper subject of sin, or means to traduce it, or indeed any way sinful, more than after it be separated from the soul: and less reason, that the same body can infect the soul, being of spiritual nature, with any contagion of sin, though it might hinder, or fail it, in some outward execution; so seemeth it to me much more agreeable unto truth, that the "blessing of God to increase, and multiply," Gen. i. 22, 28, did as well give virtue, and power unto mankind, as unto other kinds, to beget, and generate their like: and not only a dead carcase, and lifeless body, inferior to the issue of brute beasts, which do procreate their kind, both body and soul, or life. Neither see I, how Adam could be said to have "begotten a son after his own image," Gen. v. 3, opposed to God's image, ver. 1, that is, sinful. and corrupt, if he only had begotten the body, and not the soul also: which I think he did, even the whole, after a manner convenient to either nature. And if these two positions cannot stand together, that God createth the soul immediately; and that there is original sin: where these men conclude, that there is therefore no original sin, I conclude, contrariwise, that, therefore, the soul is not immediately created, nor the place in the Hebrews, so to be expounded; since the proofs for original sin are so certain, and evident.

And that it is no idle term, as is imagined, but a miserable calamity, possessing all the posterity of Adam by natural generation, and ever by them to be bewailed, and purged out, I hope plainly to prove, and withal, that by reason of it, they are naturally unable to choose, or will anything spiritually good, or truly pleasing God.

And for this, remembering what I have formerly noted from Rom. v. 12, about all men's sinning in that one and first man, observe we, that these men confess everywhere, and truly, that a man must be regenerate, or "born anew, before he can enter the kingdom of God," John iii. 3, 5, whereupon it followeth necessarily, that, by the first birth, and generation, all men are excluded from the kingdom of God. And if, by the first birth, men be not corrupt, then is not the second birth simply necessary:

Hosted by Google

but all are, rather, to endeavour to preserve the purity of the former. And this my argument is further confirmed, where Christ our Lord teacheth, that "that which is born of the flesh, is flesh," that is sinful, which he therefore opposeth to the Spirit, John iii. 6: and so the second, or new birth by the Spirit, required for that entering the kingdom of heaven, to the first, or old birth, by which all men are naturally excluded. And the same it is which we read, John i. 12, 13, that "the sons of God are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man." In which respect also Job treating of "man born of a woman," saith, that no man "can bring a clean thing out of filthiness," Job xiv. 4. Hence also was it, that David bewailing his sins of adultery and murder, in particular, and leading both himself and others from the stream, to the fountain, doth confess that "he was born in iniquity, and conceived in sin," Psa. li. 7. Join, with all these, that which the apostle testifieth both of Jews and Gentiles, that they were by nature children of wrath, that is born such, as the word nature importeth, Eph. ii. 2. Hence is it, that Jude speaking of such deceivers, as had crept into the church, and taken upon them the profession of Christ, and after "turned that grace of God into wantonness," calls them "corrupt and rotten trees, and twice dead," ver. 4, 12, who had they not been first dead in Adam in trespasses and sins, Eph. ii. 1, how could they have been twice dead? Add we unto these, the consideration of the circumcision of the Lord's people of old, livelily teaching, that nothing, coming of man's unclean seed naturally, could be clean, as Job saith, which was also further declared in the uncleanness, and so in the purification of every woman after childbirth, by burnt-offerings, and sin-offerings.

Lastly, Even common sense, and experience, which teacheth the most simple, confirmeth this doctrine of original sin. Who seeth not in children, even from their cradles, the fruit of this bitter root? crying (as Austin confesseth of himself) to be avenged of their nurses, being naturally prone to lying, for complaints, or excuses, though so brought up, as they hear no lie told: also priding themselves in any gay, or gorgeous thing, and despising others

Hosted by Google

which want the like: and so evident is this to sense, and experience, as that the fire is warm, and a stone heavy.

Now the same scriptures, which prove this natural and original sin, serve also to disprove all original and natural freedom of will or other power to any good thing truly spiritual, or pleasing God. I will apply some of the forenamed scriptures, and add some others to that purpose.

And first, since all must be regenerate, or begot, and born anew, before they can enter, or see, the kingdom of heaven, this wholly disarmeth the natural man of all power unto spiritual things, without a supernatural regeneration, or new birth by that incorruptible seed of the Word of God and Spirit of life: which must also be of the whole, and of all the parts, as is the first generation, John iii. 3, 5; 1 Pet. i. 23. Agreeable whereunto is that Eph. ii. 1, where all are said to be dead in trespasses and sins. These men grant it of Adam, by his offence: and that scripture, with others, teach the same of all men by nature, and through that his "one offence." And as no motion, or action of natural life, can possibly be made, or performed, by a man naturally dead; so neither any spiritual motion, or action, by any dead spiritually, till God breathe into him anew that his quickening Spirit, the Spirit of life. And as of things unknown there is no desire, or will, so is it not possible that the natural or animal man (for that title is given him of his more noble part the soul) which knows not, nor is capable of the things of the Spirit, being discerned spiritually, should will, or desire them. Rom. viii. 10; 2 Cor. iii. 6. Yea, being offered by the preaching of the gospel, they are foolishness unto him, and things which he savoureth not: the very wisdom, or minding of the flesh being enmity against God, which is "not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be." Rom. viii. 5. If it be asked, why doth God then require it should be, or punish men where it is not? it is easily answered, that this inability cometh by man's own default. God made all men, in Adam, able to keep the law: and the obedience thereof is due debt unto God: now the inability of the debtor, and his heirs, especially by their own default, is no sufficient discharge of the debt unto the creditor who lent it: so neither doth man's inability prejudice the Lord's right, but that he may in the

Hosted by Google

course of justice, require that obedience to his holy law, unto which by creation he enabled mankind. And for faith in Christ, and repentance, which are the sum of the gospel, God doth not require them, as due from the creature, to a Creator, by order of justice, but as conditions convenient unto man, dead in sin and misery, if he will be made partakers of that life and light to come into the world; and offered by Christ: which whilst men despise, loving darkness more than light because their works are evil: their condemnation followeth upon their impenitency, and unbelief, as doth the death of a wounded man upon his wilful contempt of the sovereign salve offered for his healing. John iii. 19.

To conclude, then, they of whom God requires this faith, repentance and obedience, either yield it him answerably, or not? If not; as they cannot, so their own hearts and consciences will witness against them, that they will not; but do, on the contrary, willingly withstand, and withdraw from the Lord's commandments: who are, therefore, inexcusable, and have no cause to complain, save upon themselves. And for them who yield submission by the effectual work of God's Spirit writing faith and the law in their hearts, much less have they cause of complaining against God, but only of thanksgiving for the grace received, by which he hath even created them anew as his workmanship: not being fit of themselves, as of themselves, so much as to think a good thought, but having God working in them both the will, and deed, according to his good pleasure. Eph. ii. 10; 1 Cor. iii. 1.

It is added, that "If original sin might have passed from Adam to his posterity, yet is the issue thereof stayed by Christ's death, which was effectual, and he, the Lamb of God, slain from the beginning of the world." Rev. xiii. 8.

I answer, that he was indeed from eternity that Lamb of God, in time to be slain: but to take away the sins of the world, as John witnessed of him: and so his death was effectual. John i. 29. It is confessed, and truly, Conclusion 30, "That Christ is become the Mediator of the new testament, and Priest of the Church." This new testament, is established in his blood: and he, a Priest for us, as he offered, and gave himself a sacrifice, and ran-

Hosted by Google

som for us: and his bloodshed was for the washing away of sins: this sacrifice for procuring pardon: and this ransom for the freeing of them, that are taken captive by sin, and Satan. This stopping then of the issue of sin, as it is intended, is but a fiction.

"That infants are," as is further affirmed, "conceived, and born in innocency without sin" is contrary to the Scriptures, 20th Conclusion: as, that "they are all undoubtedly saved," is a peremptory affirmation, but without ground. Unto the scriptures brought to prove it, which are Gen. v. 2, and i. 27, compared with 1 Cor. xv. 49, I answer, that by the image of the earthly Adam, in the last scripture, is not meant the image of God, "in wisdom, righteousness, and holiness," according to which Adam was said to be created in the former places, Col. iii. 10; Eph. iv. 24: but that corruptible and ignoble state of the body in death, from which at the resurrection of the just it shall be freed: which therefore, verse 50, is called flesh and blood, which cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven: and corruption, which cannot inherit incorruption. It should rather be minded, that Moses speaking of Adam's estate in innocency, saith he was created after God's image and likeness, Gen. i. 26, 27: but speaking of him after his fall, and of his estate then, saith that "he begat a son in and after his own likeness and image," that is, sinful and miserable, Gen. v. 1. It is further objected, from Rom. iv. 15, that "Where there is no law there is no transgression, or sin," and again from Rom. v. 13; Matt. xiii. 9; Neh. viii. 3, that "the law was not given to infants, but to them that could understand," I answer, that the law is either given vocally, and in the letter, spoken and written, and so it is not given to infants, no, nor to thousands of men and women in their persons: or written in the heart by creation with the finger of God: and so all infants have it given, as both experience, and also the Scriptures testify, where they teach that the very Gentiles, to whom it was never vocally preached, show the effects of it written in their hearts, Rom. ii. 15: unto the fulfilling of which law, all infants by nature corrupted are averse, and disposed to all disobedience, even as the whelps, and cubs of foxes, and wolves, are disposed to prey, and raven from the first, though they cannot actually so practise.

Hosted by Google

Besides, in Adam the common father of mankind, all his posterity being in his loins received, as the image of God, and lordship over the creatures, so the law of God; as "Levi," long before he was born, did in Abraham his father, "in whose loins he was, pay tithes to Melchisedec." Heb. vii. 9.

"That all actual sinners bear the image of the first Adam in his innocency, fall and restitution in the offer of grace. 1 Cor. xv. 49, and so pass under this threefold estate," is unsound sundry ways.—21st Conclusion. The great misinterpreting the Scripture, I have showed in the last Conclusion: as also Conclusion 18, that neither all, nor any of his naturally conceived posterity bear the image of his innocency: neither, yet all of them in the offer of grace; though the offer of grace not received, is a very naked image of restitution. How many thousands never had the gospel, the only means of their restitution, offered them? but sinning against the law of nature written in their hearts, and in the creatures, and "holding that truth of God in unrightousness," have been given over of God to reprobate minds, and so perished in their sins, as the apostle teacheth, Rom. i. and ii.

SECTION V.—ON GOD'S LOVE AND MAN'S RECOVERY.

Conclusions 22—25.—"That Adam being fallen, God did not hate him, but loved him still, and sought his good, Gen. iii. 8, 15. Neither doth he hate any man, that falleth with Adam, but that he loveth mankind, and from his love sent his only begotten Son into the world, to save that which was lost. John iii. 16. And that God never forsaketh the creature till there be no remedy, neither doth cast away his innocent creature from all eternity but casteth away men irrecoverable in sin. Isa. v. 4; Ezech. xviii. 23, 32, and xxxiii. 11; Luke xiii. 6, 9. And that as there is in all creatures an inclination to their young to do them good, so in the Lord towards man infinitely: who therefore doth not create, or predestinate any to destruction. no more than a father begets his child to the gallows. Ezek. xxxiii. 11; Gen. i. 21, 15, 49; Gen. v. 3," must be received with sundry limitations.

For first, it is true, that God hateth nothing that he hath

Hosted by Google

made, so far as it is his work: but as sin, coming in, hath destroyed the work of God, though not in respect of the nature, or being, yet of the integrity, and holy being of the creature; so God, through his unchangeable holiness, hating sin, doth, also, most fervently hate and abhor from the sinful creature, in whom it reigneth, in respect of it, as the Scriptures do expressly and plentifully teach, Mal. ii. 3; Psa. v. 5, 6; Prov. xvi. 5; Tit. i. 16. And God loving himself and his own holiness in the first place and most, and the creature and his good, but in the second place, the love of the creature must give way to the love of himself, and so he, necessarily, hate the obstinate sinner. And this it is most needful for all men firmly to believe, and continually to bear in mind, that they may always bewail their sins, and nourish in themselves the hatred of that which God so hateth, and for it, the creature; and for which he punisheth it with most horrible curses, and punishments for ever.

And yet, even in the very execution of his most fearful vengeance upon the reprobate, men and angels, he retaineth the general love of a Creator; and out of it, preserveth the being of the creature, which in itself, and in respect of the universal is better than not to be, though not so in the sense of the person: and also moderateth the extremity of that torment, which he both could, and might in justice, inflict.

Secondly, Though God do love all men, even sinning, as he did Adam sinning, yet not with the same degree of love wherewith he loved him: neither doth he seek their good, as he did his. When he had sinned, and so fled from God, as his enemy, he, notwithstanding, followed after him, and for his recovery, preached unto him the gospel of salvation in the seed of the woman, Gen. iii. 15: and not only so, but gave him also an heart to believe his promise; and repentance, to turn unto him: whereas many thousands in the world (even the body of the Gentiles to speak of, before Christ, and how many now?) never had the gospel so much as once published unto them, nor Christ named amongst them: Psa. cxlvii. 19, 20; Isa. lii. 15; Rom. xv. 20, 21; but had and have only the sound and preaching of the creatures, and of their natural consciences, too much corrupt, by which they were and are taught, that there is a

Hosted by Google

God, and he the Maker and Governor of the world, and Judge of all persons and things; and to be honoured and inquired after, that his will being known, he might be worshipped accordingly, Acts xiv. 16; Psa. xix. 1, 5; Rom. x. 10: for the neglect whereof, and the "withholding" * of that truth offered, in unrighteousness, they were and are given over of God to reprobate minds, and to all vile affections, and filthy lusts of their own hearts, that so sinning without the law (to wit which the Jews had, much more without that clearer revelation of Christ vouchsafed to many others) they might perish by God's judgment, Rom. i. 18—20. Much less doth God seek after all, for their recovery, as he did after Adam, by giving them his Spirit in their hearts, and by it faith and repentance, to believe and to be saved, as he did him. Matt. xi. 25; xiii. 11; John iii. 8; 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11, &c.; Phil. i. 29; 2 Tim. ii. 25. And for the love of God in sending his Son into the world to save that which was lost, John iii. 16, it is determined in the same place, to those that believe on him. But for those that believe not, but continue in unbelief, God did not love them unto salvation, so as to give his Son, effectually, to redeem them from their sins, of which more hereafter.

Secondly, It is also true that "God doth not cast away his innocent creature, nor hath created or predestinated any man to destruction," to wit, either remaining as he created him, or because he would destroy him: and this, some of the scriptures, Conclusion 25, do prove, the rest being impertinent: but that God hath from eternity decreed the condemnation of some for sin, fore-purposed by him to be suffered, and so foreseen to be wrought by man, is evident, both by the Word of God, as Jude testifieth of certain wicked men that they were ordained of old to condemnation: and God is said to have hated Esau, before he was born: that is, to have purposed the hatred of him for his sin, foreseen, and fore-purposed to be suffered: and also by the work of God, in that he doth, in time, cast away and condemn impenitent sinners: for all God's works are known unto him from the beginning of the

* The earlier versions generally employ "withholding," instead of the modern term "holding," and in the sense of detaining or hindering.

Hosted by Google

world: and God's very doing a thing, in time, is an unanswerable proof that he purposed the same thing, before time and from eternity. Jude 3, 4; Mal. i. 3; Rom. ix. 11, 13; Acts xiii. 18.

And, for God's forsaking, or leaving a man unto himself, as he usually doth it, for a punishment of former sins, so did he thus leave Adam without any such respect. He could, if he would, either have kept him from being tempted, or have delivered him out of his temptation, by his almighty power, and grace, and the irresistible efficacy of his Spirit: but God, for the trial of the will of man, and to manifest how weak the most excellent creatures are, not depending wholly upon the Creator, and not seeking their good and happiness, by cleaving unto him, the chief and unchangeable good: as also, to make way to the further declaration of his mercy and justice, did suspend, and withhold from Adam in his temptation, that efficacy of grace, by which he could, if he would, have established him irresistibly unto perseverance.

So also, could God by his all-sufficient power, if such his good will were, recover thousands, that perish in and by their sins: otherwise he were not almighty, nor that true, which is said of him in the psalm, "He doth whatsoever pleaseth him," Psa. cxv. 3. Besides, it should else follow, that sin and Satan were stronger than he: and which he could not possibly defeat and withstand: which is as impossible, as that God should not be God. He is able by his almighty power, if such his good pleasure be, to raise, of the very stones, children unto Abraham, Luke iii. 8: and by taking away the stony heart, to give an heart of flesh, tender and sensible, and to write in it his will and law. Ezek. xi. 19.

And what the Lord's power is, in remedying, and recovering of most desperate sinners, may be seen in some particulars. In the recovery of Manasseh, an horrible and apostate idolater, a vile sorcerer and wizard, and most cruel murderer, "filling the streets with innocent blood," 2 Kings xxi. 1, 2, 16; 2 Chron. xxxiii. 12, 13: of Mary Magdalen possessed with seven devils, Luke viii. 2: and of Saul, a persecutor, blasphemer, and oppressor, and that when the fire of most violent persecution burned

Hosted by Google

hottest in his breast: causing him to breathe out of his mouth threatenings and slaughter, as smoke, Acts ix. 1; 1 Tim. i. 13. And since all men are, by nature, children of wrath and dead in sins, Eph. ii. 2, so that they who are the Lord's, have new life put into them, yea, are born, yea, which is more, created anew, it showeth, that the whole being and life of the spiritual man, with all the motions and inclinations thereof, are of God's special and supernatural grace; as also that though men in themselves be utterly remediless, and irrecoverable, yet are they by God's grace, and power recoverable, if such his good will be.

The scriptures, Isa. v. 4; Ezek. xviii. 23, 33; Luke xiii. 6, 9, speak of the Lord's dealing with his church in the outward ministry of the Word, and other common motives to repentance: as is also further manifest, Matt. xxi. 33, 34, &c., and so are neither to be understood (as here they are) of the Lord's dealing with all men, nor at all of the uttermost efficacy of his Spirit, when he pleaseth to work by it, what he can for the recovery of sinners.

Lastly, Touching the similitude brought from a natural father, I must use two limitations: the former that a natural father would not suffer his son to come to the gallows, or desert thereof, if he could possibly in his utmost power hinder it: he would rather wish not to beget him at all, or that he might never be born: but so is it not with God, who both willingly produceth, and preserveth the creature, whom he purposeth to destroy for sin, which he foreseeth the creature will work, and suffereth him to fall into, though he could, would he use the utmost of his power, hinder both the sin, and punishment. And secondly, the hanging of the child is no way to the honour of his natural father, but to his grief, and shame every way: but, on the contrary, the destruction of the wicked for their sins, is to the great glory of the justice of the Creator, which than it should not be magnified, better all men and angels perish.

Touching the 26th Conclusion, God hath not only determined before the world, that the way of salvation shall be by Christ: and foreseen who would follow it, (as they teach) but hath also determined, in particular, whom he

Hosted by Google

would effectually call to the participation of that grace: which being his own work, in time, he hath therefore purposed, before time. It is he that revealeth this way unto man from heaven: which flesh and blood cannot do: who also must draw them who come unto it. Matt. xi. 25; Eph. i. 5, 7, 9, 11; Rom. ix. 11, 15. And this he doth first by sending his gospel of salvation to such, as are his (in his decree), Acts xiii. 47, 48; xviii. 9, 10, then by opening the heart, as of Lydia, to listen unto it, Acts xvi. 4, and so working in their hearts by his Spirit to believe and obey it, he perfecteth their happiness in glory. Rom. viii. 30, 31. So that, God foreseeth that such and such will believe, and choose the way of life, because he fore-purposeth to give them this grace, knowledge, will, and power to believe, and to choose the good way: and all this of his good and gracious pleasure towards them, on whom he will show mercy. And this, the places brought by those men, Eph. i. 4, 5; 2 Tim. i. 9, do most directly prove: so also doth, Jude 4, expressly teach, not that God foresaw who would follow the way of infidelity and impenitence, for which they allege it: but whom God hath fore-ordained to condemnation for their wickedness. The Scriptures, then, do, nowhere, prove any such idle foresight in God, as is imagined by these men, and others: as if God were in truth, but a prognosticator and reader of men's destinies: who could only foretell what should be done by, and become of these and these men.

SECTION VI.—ON UNIVERSAL REDEMPTION.

Touching the 27th Conclusion: That "as God created all men according to his image, so hath he redeemed all that fall by actual sin, to the same end: and that God in his redemption hath not swerved from his mercy, which he manifested in his creation:" and that part of Conclusion 28th, where it is said, "that God in his love to his enemies gave Christ to die, and so bought them that deny him;" sundry things are to be observed.

And first, that God did not manifest any mercy but only goodness, in the creation: for mercy presupposeth misery in him towards whom it is shown. Secondly, it is no swerving at all of God's goodness, if he extend not

Hosted by Google

the grace of redemption to as many as he did the grace of creation: for then Christ should have redeemed the angels, who were partakers of a greater grace of creation, which he in no sort did. And if God did in justice pass by the angels that sinned, Heb. ii. 16: might he not in the same justice have passed by men also? And if he might in justice have passed by all, (where he could not, in justice, nor possibly, create one man unjust, as no man will deny but our redemption by Christ was a work of God's mercy and not of his justice) is it injustice in him to pass by some, who also on their part take pleasure in unrighteousness, and so continue in their estate of impenitence, and unbelief, loving darkness more than light, because their works are evil?

Of the scriptures brought: first, that of John i. 3, shows that by Christ, to wit, as God, all things were made or created, which is nothing to the present matter. And where, ver. 16, he saith, of his fulness we all have received, and grace for grace, he speaks not of all men, but only of all those, who receive Christ, and believe in his name, as ver. 12, and are born of God, ver. 13. So 2 Cor. v. 19, by the world which God reconciled to himself in Christ, are not meant all that actually sin, but such as by the word of reconciliation preached unto them, and believed by them, have their sins forgiven them.

By all men, 1 Tim. ii. 6, is meant all sorts of men, as well kings and magistrates, whom, because they were for the present, persecutors of the saints, it seems some thought they were not to pray for, as for others. Ver. 1, he exhorts to pray for all men: and ver. 2, he shows his meaning to be for all sorts, as kings, and them in authority under them, whom, ver. 4, he saith God would have saved as well as others: as for whom Christ died, and so redeemed them, as well as others. Of Ezek. xxxiii. I have spoken formerly, as also of John iii. 16.

By the enemies spoken of, Rom. v. 10, are meant only such, as are, in time, actually reconciled to God, and saved: as appears plainly, if the place be well considered; whom God is said to love, and that not with the common love of a Creator towards the creature, but with the love of a Redeemer, in respect of his decree of love, and not of

Hosted by Google

the actual application of it, as he is said to have loved Jacob, and hated Esau, before they were born. Actually he did not hate, or love the one, or other, neither doth or can God love actually wicked men so remaining, Psa. v. 5, 6. Lastly, Christ is said, 2 Pet. ii. 1, to have bought those deceivers, in respect of the former profession of holiness which they made; by which in the judgment of charity, they were so esteemed: as appears evidently in Jude, who speaking of the same persons saith, ver. 3, they were "ungodly men crept" into the church.

Now for Christ's redemption, it must be known, that the word λύτρωσις, redemption, used in the Scriptures, is borrowed from the custom of freeing prisoners, taken in war, from death, or bondage, by paying a just price, or ransom for them. And so to affirm that "Christ hath redeemed all that fall by actual sin," is to affirm, that he hath paid a price to the justice of God, for all such, and freed them from the guilt and bondage of sin and Satan; and so, consequently, that all who have sinned, actually, have faith, and repentance: without which they cannot have forgiveness of sins, nor freedom from the bondage, and guilt thereof. It is confessed, and truly, Conclusion 35, that the efficacy of Christ's death is only derived to them which mortify their sins, &c., and, therein, directly granted that Christ's death is not effectual for all men; and that it is in itself sufficient for all, being the death of him that was God, Acts xx. 28, we acknowledge, as also that no particular person, not having sinned against the Holy Ghost, can be excluded either by himself, or us, from the number of them, for whom Christ died. John iii. 36; Acts x. 43; 2 Cor. iii. 17. It were against faith, to pray that God would save all the men, that are, and shall be in the world to the end thereof: but love teacheth me to pray for any person particularly, upon occasion.

Now, for that these men allege, Rom. v. to prove that "Christ redeemed all who sin actually:" and Mr. Helwisse and others much insist upon the same place, to prove that he redeemed all, who sin in Adam: and so would have a free-will though not by nature, which they dislike, but by grace given to all: as if Turks, and Pagans, and all the wicked world were in Christ, and so free from condemna-

Hosted by Google

tion, Rom. viii. 1, and they who had crucified the flesh and the lusts thereof, Gal. iv. 24, which they must be, before they can be partakers of the grace of God through Christ, or of any free-will through him. John xv. 5. I will plainly, and briefly prove, the Lord assisting me, that the apostle intends neither the one, nor the other, but the contrary.

The apostle's meaning there is to show the privileges of the faithful: that, notwithstanding all their afflictions, "they have peace with God:" "access unto his grace and hope of glory," having by faith assurance of "the love of God shed into their hearts by the Holy Ghost." This love of God he confirmeth unto them, by the work of their redemption: and proveth that since out of the love of God, "Christ died for them when they were sinners, and justified them by his blood, much more should they be saved from wrath through him;" and that if "when they were enemies, they were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled they should be saved by his life:" and again, "that they who had received that abundance of grace, and gift of righteousness, should reign in life by Jesus Christ:" and in the last place, that "that grace should reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. v. 2, 3, 8—10, 17. Which grace he also amplifieth, and confirmeth by comparing Christ as the second Adam, with the first Adam; teaching that both the one, and the other did, and do propagate to all theirs, what theirs was: the first Adam, sin and death to all coming of him naturally: the second Adam, Christ, righteousness and eternal life to all that are in him spiritually, and for whom he died. The meaning then of the apostle seems unto me plainly to be this: that, for whomsoever Christ did indeed and effectually die, they should certainly be saved; and that, whomsoever God did reconcile by his death, he will much more save by his life, notwithstanding their afflictions and all other the enemies of their salvation: and so to be the same in effect with that which the same apostle hath, Rom. viii. 28, that "All things shall work together for the best unto them that love God even unto them who are called of purpose:" and that "those who

Hosted by Google

are predestinate are also called, and justified, and glorified;" and verses 32, 39, that to them, "for whom God hath not spared to give his Son, he will give all things with him:" and so victory over sin, and Satan, and their own flesh, with all temptations, so as "nothing shall separate them from the love of God."

SECTION VII.—ON APOSTACY FROM GRACE.

From Rom. v. then, may be more truly, and I am persuaded undeniably, concluded, these two things. 1. That Christ did not effectually die for, or reconcile, by his death, all men in particular: for then all should be saved by his life: and 2ndly, That whomsoever he so died for, and effectually reconciled, they shall be kept by the power of God, and of his grace, unto eternal life: yea "He that believeth in the Son," saith John the Baptist, "hath eternal life," John iii. 36: and drinking once of the water which Christ giveth, "he shall never thirst again, but it shall be in him a well of water, springing up to eternal life," John iv. 14. A well-spring, we know, is never wholly dry, though a ditch be: as it is also one thing to drink of this water of life: and another thing only to taste of it: which they that do, may fall away, as never having had their thirst indeed quenched in them, nor having drunk in the rain of grace, as ver. 7; Heb. vi. 4—6. And it is well to be observed by us, how carefully the Holy Ghost, in this, and in other places, preventeth both the offence at, and error about men's falling away from their holy profession.

We read of some, in the parable of the sower, who receive the seed of the Word with joy, and in whom it hath also got some kind of growth, and yet they come to nothing: but we find in the same place, that the soul of those men's hearts, was never indeed good; but at the best, as stony and thorny ground: but the seed sown in the good ground indeed, decays not, but grows up, and is fruitful to the harvest. Matt. xiii. 5, 7, 20, 23.

So Paul, 2 Tim. ii. 18—20, showeth that some there are, who have their faith destroyed by heresies, and evil lies: but he gives us to understand in the same place, that these men were never indeed under the seal of God's

Hosted by Google

election, nor known of him, nor vessels of honour, of silver, and of gold.

The apostle Peter, 2 Epis. ii. 1, 21, 22, likewise speaketh of some, who denied the Lord that bought them, to wit, being judged by their former profession, but in the same place, he shows that the same persons were but indeed dogs and swine, at the best, though outwardly washed, and disburdened of such sins, as clogged their consciences, as is the dog by vomiting of his surchargure. And Jude, ver. 4, speaking of those very men expressly chargeth them, but to have crept in, at the first, &c.

Lastly, John, 1 Epis. ii. 18, 19, speaking of "many Antichrists," who "went out" from the true church and Christians, saith plainly that they "were not of them," that is, not of the number of God's truly anointed ones: and that by their not continuing with them it appeared, "they were never of them." "For they that are born of God cannot commit sin, because the seed of God's Word abideth in them," as it followeth in the same Epistle, chap. iii. 9: and thus much in effect these men confess, when they teach, as the truth is and Scripture proveth, Conclusion 47, "That the regenerate man shall be a pillar in the house of God, and shall go no more out." Rev. iii. 12. And if men truly justified, and sanctified should wholly fall away, they could not possibly be recovered, but were as trees twice dead, and so to be plucked up by the roots, Jude 12: neither can there be two new births, any more than two first births: and if there might, then must there be also an answerable repeating of baptism, which is the lavacher of the new birth. Tit. iii. 5.

To conclude this point, they who either hold, that Christ effectually redeemed all from their natural corruption, or, that any truly justified and sanctified, may wholly fall away and perish, do divide Christ from himself, and make him a party Saviour; and a priest for some, to redeem them by his death, to whom he is not a king to save them by his life; and a Saviour, in part, to the very damned at the last day: freeing all of them from the guilt of their original sin; and many of them, even from one part of their actual sins, namely, so much as they wrought, before the time of their falling away, but not

Hosted by Google

from the rest. Which, how vain a thing it is to imagine, and how derogatory to the excellency and perfection of Christ's sacrifice and mediation, needs not be shown. All who have any part in Christ, are in Christ, and so free from condemnation, Rom. viii. 5: and unto whomsoever he shall appear a Saviour they are his people and he shall save them from all their sins, and not from some part of them only.

SECTION VIII.—ON CHRIST'S SACRIFICE.

That "the sacrifice of Christ's body and blood offered unto God, his Father, upon the cross, though a sacrifice of sweet savour, and that God be well pleased in him, doth not reconcile God unto us, who did never hate us, nor was our enemy, but reconcileth us unto God, 2 Cor. v. 19, and slayeth the enmity and hatred, which is in us against God," Eph. ii. 14, 16; Rom. i. 30, is most untrue, and, indeed, a very pernicious doctrine, destroying the main fruit of Christ's sacrifice, and death.

As one of the scriptures quoted, which is Rom. i. 30, speaks of wicked men's hating of God, so are the rest meant of God's hatred towards wicked men; which they also fully prove. And if the sacrifice of Christ's body and blood upon the cross, were a sweet-smelling savour unto his Father, is it not evident that we did formerly stink in God's nostrils by reason of our sins? Where he gave himself a sacrifice for us, was it not to appease the Father's wrath towards us? In which respect he is said to be our propitiation and advocate if we sin, 1 John ii. 1, 2: being as our eternal High-priest, sprinkled with the blood of his cross, entered the most holy place, the heavens, and there appearing continually to pacify the wrath of his Father, and to procure for us all grace. Who also to redeem us from the curse of the law under which we, with all flesh, were, was made a curse for us: paying a price for us to satisfy the justice of his Father. Gal. iii. 10; 1 Cor. vi. 20. And if God be well-pleased in him, doth it not follow that he is displeased without him? Matt. iii. 17. So by "the reconciliation of the world unto God through Christ," 2 Cor. v. 19, is not meant our laying aside of hatred, and enmity against God, though that follow upon the other, but the taking away of

Hosted by Google

his hatred and enmity towards us, as is evident in that the apostle in the former verse placeth this reconciliation in God's not imputing our sins unto us: the end of his exhortation, ver. 20, being to provoke us to the growth of faith for the applying of the same. Neither speaketh he, Eph. ii. 14—16, of the slaying of the enmity and hatred in us against God, as is said: but first of the slaying of the hatred between Jews and Gentiles, by breaking down the partition wall of ceremonies: and secondly, and more principally, of slaying the hatred wherewith God hated both, for sin, being the one, and other by nature "children of wrath," ver. 3, that is, under the wrath of God, as their deserved inheritance. So that the chief and first work of our redemption by Christ, is the freeing of us from the guilt of sin and most fearful wrath of God, by paying the price of his precious blood for a ransom to the justice of his Father, thereby procuring him, of a most severe and fearful Judge to become unto us a gracious Father, and to love us unto life: which love of his "being shed into our hearts by the Holy Ghost," and we being thereof persuaded, doth effectually allure us to love him again, who hath so loved us in his Son.

SECTION IX.—ON REGENERATION.

Now whereas in Conclusion 57th, and so forward, many things concerning faith, repentance, the regenerate man, and new creature: are set down both unsoundly and unorderly, I think it best briefly to note down in the first place, the truth, and order of those things: and so to compare therewith the particulars in the confession.

This work of grace, then, in the general, God beginneth ordinarily by the ministry of his Word, and first of the law: which, through man's inability to keep it, convinceth and condemneth him, and so leaves him under God's curse: from whence also ariseth in the mind, a servile fear of God and his judgments, with grief and sorrow in respect thereof, which is commonly called legal repentance, or (better) penitency, and so a despairing of all remedy in a man's self. Rom. viii. 3, and chap. vii. 7; Gal. iii. 10. Then cometh the gospel of glad tidings, offering grace, and mercy unto those, who "being weary and heavy laden," do come unto

Hosted by Google

Christ for ease and rest, by believing in him, Matt. xi. 28; which so many do as are ordained of God to eternal life, Acts xiii. 48; 2 Cor. iii. 6; ii. 10—12: God with and by the same gospel ministering, and conveying the graces of his Spirit into the heart, by which a man becomes of a natural man, a spiritual man, and of these graces, first and principally faith, by which Christ is received, John i. 12, and the life of grace begun, as Paul testifieth, Gal. ii. 20, that he lived by faith in the Son of God. From which faith and assurance of the forgiveness of sins, and so great love of God shed into the heart of a miserable sinner, ariseth, by reflection, as it were, a love again towards God, and from this love, a godly sorrow for sin wrought against so good a God: and from this sorrow, true repentance, and the turning of the heart from evil to good, with an hatred, fear, and earnest endeavour to avoid sin in respect of God's mercy: as on the contrary a love, desire, and constant endeavour of and unto whatsoever pleaseth him. Now all these, and all other truly spiritual graces, howsoever wrought by that one Spirit, and at one time, yet are in the order of nature and manifestation, one before another, and so faith the cause of the rest. Luke vii. 47; 2 Cor. vii. 10; Psa. ciii. 4, and cxxx. 4; 1 Cor. xii. 4.

Where then it is said, Conclusion 56, that "the new creature followeth repentance," it is not so in truth, nor the scripture brought, which is Luke iii. 6, anything pertinent, though to our sense and manifestation, it seem so to be. For this repentance is a work of man immediately, though formerly wrought in him of God, 2 Tim. ii. 25, and so followeth the work of our regeneration or re-creation, which is God's work. Repentance ariseth from a "godly sorrow," which can only be in a godly man, as a fruit of a good tree; and this godly man, all being ungodly by nature, must be a new creature, or regenerate of God: though for the perfecting of our new creature, and till the old man be wholly crucified, repentance be required, as a cause, or means thereof. 2 Cor. vii. 10; Matt. vii. 18. So neither doth repentance go before faith, as it is put, Conclusion 58, but followeth it as a fruit thereof; without which no man can please God; and so not repent aright, Heb. xi. 6: our repentance arising from a sorrow for the offending of God,

Hosted by Google

this sorrow from the knowledge of his love towards us, which is faith: which faith purifieth the heart, and is the beginning of all spiritual life in us, as I have formerly proved. Acts xv. 9.

That "man," viz. natural, "hath power to reject the motions of God's Spirit," as is affirmed, I acknowledge, and the two scriptures, Matt. xxiii. 37; Acts vii. 51, besides woeful experience prove it: but deny, that he hath power to receive these motions, till God by the supernatural gift of grace open his eyes, and change his will thereunto, as hath formerly been proved in the 18th Conclusion. The third scripture, which is Acts vi. 10, speaks of no such thing, but only shows how mightily Stephen confuted his adversaries in disputation.

The last place, which is Rom. x. 14, showeth that none can believe without preaching: and ver. 18, that the Gentiles had God preached unto them from the beginning, by the sound of the creatures, as Psa. xix. 5, neither can more be thence proved. Lastly, in the 58th Conclusion, the "new creature" is ill and dangerously, made a part of "our justification before God," which the Scriptures do ascribe only to faith: and "the free grace of God, through that redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Rom. iii. 24, 25, 28. Our redemption, then, or justification properly taken, is in Christ, and not in ourselves; as it should be, if it stood in our sanctification or the new creature, which is affirmed. Our sanctification, or renovation is an inseparable work of that faith by which we are justified, Acts xv. 9, but doth not answer the rigour of God's justice, nor can present us innocent, before his judgment-seat, being imperfect in this world, by reason of the "root of sin yet abiding in us, which we cannot pluck up out of our hearts," as is confessed, Proposition 67, though elsewhere denied. That only the righteousness of Christ can do, being imputed by grace, and by faith received: "who was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." 2 Cor. v. 21. Now as Christ became sin for us, not by having our sin dwelling in him, but imputed unto him, so we become the righteousness of God, that is, perfectly righteous before God, by his righteousness imputed to us, and not by that which dwelleth in us: which was

Hosted by Google

also livelily figured in, and is effectually proved by the sacrifices under the law, by the offering whereof, as the unclean person, or he that had sinned, was legally cleansed and purified, and his sin forgiven: so by the merit, and purity of that one oblation of Christ offered once for all, and applied by faith, are we cleansed from the guilt of sin, and reconciled to God for ever. Lev. v. 10, 13, 16, 18; xii. 8.

"That God doth not, in our regeneration, use the help of any creature, nor doth it, by the doctrine of faith and repentance, but immediately in the soul," 59th Conclusion, is an old error of the Anabaptists, condemned expressly by the scriptures brought to justify it. The first whereof is James i. 15, where God is said to "have begotten us by the word of truth:" which word therefore we are "to be swift to hear," ver. 19, which is elsewhere called good seed, and the word of life, which word even that which was preached by the apostles, ver. 25; is also called, 1 Pet. i. 23, the immortal seed, which falling in good ground never perisheth, but bringeth forth fruit to eternal life. Matt. xiii. 3—23.

Not to trouble the reader with many scriptures for the proof of that, which every regenerate man's experience doth confirm, the apostle calling himself the father of the Corinthians, who had in Jesus Christ begot them by the gospel, and them his children in the same respect, ver. 14, and Onesimus his son, whom he begot in his bonds: and Titus his natural son, according to the common faith, expressly teacheth the use of man's ministry for the regeneration of the elect, and ministration of the Spirit of life. 2 Cor. iii. 6; 1 Cor. iv. 15; Philemon 10; Tit. i. 3.

Alike, if not more deceitful, and dangerous is that other proposition, Conclusions 60—63.

"That the new creature, which is begotten of God, needeth not the outward scriptures, creatures, or ordinances of the church to support him, but is above them, 1 Cor. xiii. 10; 1 John ii. 27, seeing he hath in himself three witnesses, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, which are better than all scriptures, or creatures, though such as have not attained the new creature need them, for instruction, comfort, and to stir them up, &c. 2 Pet. i. 19; 1 Cor. xi. 26; Eph. iv. 12, 13."

Hosted by Google

Let the scriptures brought be judge, and they will plead their own dignity against them, by whom they are thus vilely debased. In 2 Pet. i. 19, the apostle doth not compare the inward Spirit with the outward Scriptures, but the Scriptures with themselves, the writings of the prophets, which he compares to a light shining in a dark place, unto the writings and preachings of the apostles, which revealing Christ come in the flesh, he compares to the dawning day, and morning star. Besides even they whom Peter exhorts to attend upon the Scriptures, had obtained the new creature: as having obtained the same precious faith with Peter, and all things belonging to life and godliness, by the Divine power, 2 Pet. i. 1, 3: who are also expressly said to be regenerate unto a lively hope, 1 Pet. i. 3, and ver. 23, to be born anew, by the immortal seed, the Word of God. So were the Corinthians also born anew, in that they were, though but babes in Christ, and having much flesh yet abiding in them, 1 Cor. iii. 1; Phil. i. 6; 1 Thess. v. 2; Acts i. 11: who were to use the Lord's Supper, to show forth his death till he came, that is, till his general coming to judgment, or special, at their death, 1 Cor. xi. 26, which is the second scripture.

So for the third scripture, Eph. iv. 12, 13, the apostle's meaning is not, that the godly should have no further need of the ministry for their edification, when they were "come to a perfect man," as there he speaks, that is, when they ceased to be as children, wavering-minded, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, but that they should so use it, as thereby to bring them to that perfect and manly estate, and therein to establish them. Neither does the particle "until" import a ceasing of the use of the ministry when men become perfect, and growing past that childish waveringness there reproved, but a not ceasing before then: as it is also used sundry times in the Scriptures, as, 1 Tim. iv. 13; Rev. ii. 25, and elsewhere.

In 1 Cor. xiii. 10, 12, the apostle doth not speak of the estate of perfection in this life, but in that to come, when the measure of our knowledge shall be perfect, which is now but in part, and but as a child's in comparison of a man's: as it shall also be immediate, and we see God face to face: when there shall be no use of the glass of the Word, and

Hosted by Google

ordinances, when prophesying and tongues shall cease, yea when even faith and hope shall cease: the things believed and hoped for being fully attained, and only love shall abide, which is therefore called the greatest of the three, ver. 13.

The apostle's meaning also, 1 John ii. 27, is greatly mistaken: which is not that the anointing, or Spirit which they had received, set them above the Scriptures, and all outward teachings: but that he needed not teach them, as ignorant of these things, which by that anointing, or Spirit, were sealed up unto their consciences: as where Paul tells the Thessalonians "that he needs not write unto them of brotherly love, because they were taught of God one to love another," his meaning only is, that they were not without that grace, but did practise it: yet doth he in the very same place, ver. 10, exhort them to increase more and more. 1 Thess. iv. 9. So doth John also write that his Epistle to teach and admonish those anointed ones to beware of false prophets and Antichrists of whom they were in danger, as of other evils.

Two other scriptures are intended, but so misput, as I cannot find which they are, and therefore pass them by; being also assured they can give no confirmation to this vain presumption, deceiving under a show of angelical perfection.

The reason, to prove the Scriptures unnecessary from the inward witness of the Father, Word, and Spirit, is very deceitful; since the inward grace doth not abolish but establish the outward means, by which it is wrought, and increased. David had this witness in his heart, being a man after God's heart, and was regenerate, and yet he desires God to teach him the way of his statutes: and that he would open his eyes that he might see the marvels of his law, which he professes he will not forget. Psa. cxix. 16, 18, 33. And being driven from the tabernacle, and visible ordinances of God, how did he bewail his want, and misery? Far was he from this imagined spirituality. The apostle calls the gospel the power of God to salvation: and exhorts Timothy to continue in it, to the saving of himself and others: by the ministry whereof, he also laboured to present the Corinthians a pure virgin unto

Hosted by Google

Christ. Rom. i. 16; 1 Tim. iv. 16; 2 Cor. xi. 2. All which places prove the necessary use of it till death, even for the most perfect.

And see whither these things lead. The natural, unregenerate, and unsanctified man, can have no right use of the gospel, and holy things: and the spiritual, regenerate, and new creature, needs them not. 1 Cor. ii. 14; Tit. i. 15. To whom then are they given: or by whom can they be rightly used? And behold here, the malice and craft of the devil, who assailing God's people continually with his temptations: from which, Peter and Paul were not free, Luke xxii. 31; 2 Cor. xii. 7, no nor Christ himself, who was "tempted in all points, like as we are, but without sin," Heb. iv. 15: would yet persuade them, they had no need of their spiritual armour, in special, of the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, Eph. vi. 17; whereof even Christ himself also in his temptations had use, yea, need to drive away Satan, as he had need of meat and drink to drive away hunger, and thirst: though he could by his Divine power have resisted both, without means. Matt. iv. 1, 4, 7, 10. Our victory, saith John, is our faith, 1 John v. 4: and the foundation of our faith, are the writings of the apostles and prophets: and is the foundation of no use for the standing of the building? or will not the enemy of our salvation easily overthrow the building, when he hath undermined the foundation? Eph. ii. 20.

Add to these things, that the Scriptures, the law and gospel, shall be the judge of all to whom they come. And is any man above his judge? or if this be not, what is it for man to exalt himself above all that is called God? Rom. ii. 12, 16; 2 Thess. 2, 4; 1 Pet. iv. 18.

Lastly, The regenerate are continually to grow in grace, and for that end to desire the sincere milk of the Word to grow thereby. 1 Pet. ii. 2.

SECTION X.—ON PERFECTION.

But, lo! here another mischief; the persuasion of perfection in holiness, which these men would also have us think Mr. Smyth had attained, a little before his death. And it made well for the credit of the doctrine, that he did not survive: for then the imperfections of his life, would

Hosted by Google

have discovered the error of the doctrine. Yea, verily, if this were his faith here published, it is too evident how far he was from perfection. And for the help of those who are in danger of this great and deep seduction, I will here insert a few things touching perfection.

And first, We acknowledge all the faithful perfect, and that perfectly, by Christ's perfect obedience and righteousness imputed unto them for their justification: for by one oblation he hath perfected or consecrated for ever them that are sanctified. Heb. x. 14. Secondly, We acknowledge in them an inherent perfection of righteousness and holiness, which is their sincerity, integrity, and uprightness of heart in all things before God: usually called the perfection of parts: as a child, though new born, is a perfect man in all the parts: and thus James saith, that he who sins not in word, is a perfect man, that is, he is able to bridle all the body. James iii. 2, 3. And this commendation the Scriptures give of men, notwithstanding their frailties, that are not hypocrites, and hollow-hearted: the whole man being sanctified, though not wholly. 1 Kings xv. 14; Job i. 1. Thirdly, We acknowledge also in some men a perfection in degree, not absolute, but in comparison of others, though godly: and that, whereas some are but as children and babes in grace, others are as grown and perfect men in comparison, both for knowledge, stableness of faith, and all grace. Which two sorts of men are usually opposed as strong and weak, in the Scriptures: unto which perfection all must strive to attain, and not continue always children and babes, which is both shameful and dangerous. Heb. v. 12—14; Eph. iv. 11—13; Phil. iii. 15; Rom. xv. 1.

But, for any such perfection in this world, as wherein a man stands not need continually to renew his repentance, and to purge himself of the remnants of sin, "casting off the old man," and "putting on the new man," and to grow in the knowledge, and grace of God by the use of the Scriptures, and other God's ordinances leading thereunto, it is none other but a most dangerous delusion of that "prince of darkness transforming himself into an angel of light."

And to let pass the common infirmities, yea (by occa-

Hosted by Google

sion) the greater falls, noted in the Scriptures, of those holy men, of whose perfection the same Scriptures testify: as also the daily, monthly, and yearly sacrifices ordinarily to be offered of old, for all and every one of the congregation, as evidences of their guilt. Solomon teacheth, 1 Kings viii. 46, that there is no man, that sinneth not; according to which, is that in the Preacher, Eccl. vii. 20, "There is not a wise man upon earth that doth good, and sinneth not." And who can say (saith the wise man) "I have made my heart clean, I am clean from my sin?" Prov. xx. 9. And if any man do say that he hath no sin, he deceiveth himself, and there is no truth in him. For though he who is born of God sinneth not, that is commits not, or works not sin, making it his course and trade, as it were, which only he doth, who is of the devil, yet puts John himself in the number of them, who cannot say without lying, that they sin not. 1 John i. 8; iii. 4—8. Thus David acknowledgeth in general, that no man can know his errors, and so doth pray to be freed from secret faults, Psa. xix. 12: and so doth the apostle profess of himself in particular that he is not perfect; but only follows after, and presses hard toward the mark, Phil. iii. 12, 13: and however in that his race, he was so cumbered with that his clogging and pressing sin, Heb. xii. 1, as that like a law it forced him both from the good which he would have done, and to the evil which he would not have done, and that when he would have done well, evil was present with him: though in his inward man, that is, so far as he was regenerate, which was far beyond any now, "he delighted in the law of God, and served it." Rom. vii. 7—25.

Lastly, If any in this life come to the perfection of leaving sinning, they must also leave praying, and so leave being Christ's disciples: for he hath taught all his disciples every day to ask the forgiveness of their trespasses, Matt. vi. 12: yea, they must be past being godly, for "for this," because God is merciful in forgiving sins, "every godly man shall pray unto him in an acceptable time." Psa. xxxii. 6. And lastly, they must be past hope of Christ's coming in glory, for "every one that hath this hope in him, purgeth himself," as he is pure. 1 John iii. 3. So long,

Hosted by Google

therefore, as we are absent from Christ, and till our glory in him appear, we must still be purging ourselves; which if the filth of sin were not still in us, less or more, we need not be: as we must also grow in grace, and edify ourselves in our most holy faith, being, as we are from the truth, so far from the vain presumption of any such perfection, as is by these men intended.

SECTION XI.—ON THE VISIBLE CHURCH.

That "the outward or visible church consists of penitent persons, and believing only," Conclusions 61—71, opposing them to impenitent and unbelievers, and that such only are to be baptized, I acknowledge, and the scriptures brought confirm; but deny it, opposing believers to their infants, which are neither unbelievers and impenitent, nor innocent, as is affirmed. The vineyard and kingdom which was taken from the Jews, is let out, and given to us, Matt. xxi. 43, in which though no briars, nor brambles, nor fruitless trees might grow, yet young plants, and imps, not yet bringing forth fruit actually, both might and may; as children might and may be in God's kingdom, though no rebels.

In Conclusion 65, the visible church is unfitly called, "a figure of the invisible;" as is the "invisible" untruly said to "consist only of the spirits of just and perfect men." He who hath in him true faith, and holiness, is a member of the invisible church; and the same person, making holy profession thereof, outwardly, in the order left by Christ, a member of the visible church: and the whole man of both, and not the soul of the one, and body of the other: though of the invisible in respect of the inward faith seen of God; and of the visible in respect of the outward manifestation before men, arising from the former. The scriptures brought, which are Rev. i. 10, with xxi. 2, 13, 27, speak of the visible church only, and so are impertinent.

The particulars which I deem amiss, Conclusion 68, I have noted in the 56th proposition: and refer the reader thither.

"That the sacraments have the same use that the Word hath, and teach to the eye of them that understand, as the Word teacheth the ears of them, that have ears to hear, Prov. ii. 2, and that therefore they pertain no more to

Hosted by Google

infants, than the Word doth," Conclusion 74; is neither true in all points, nor well applied in any.

For First, The Word serves to convert men, Psa. xix. 7, and is to be ministered to unconverted and profane persons: which use the sacraments have not, nor must be administered to such. Secondly, If this, applied to infants, were true, then should not circumcision have been administered to the Israelitish infants, who had not ears to hear. Yet is the ground good, being rightly laid, unto which that also, Conclusion 73, is agreeable, though the Scriptures be brought hand over head to confirm it. For as God by promising Abraham that he would be his God, and the God of his seed, preached to his ear, so by giving him, and his seed circumcision, he preached to his eye, for the ratification of the same promise. And so is it now with us, who have received grace to be of the faith of Abraham, having the same covenant, promise, or gospel preached by doctrine to our ear, and confirmed by baptism to our eye, for ourselves and our seed.

To the 82nd Conclusion, "that there is no succession in that outward church, but that all the succession is from heaven, and that the new creature only hath the thing signified, and substance, whereof the outward church, and ordinances are shadows," Col. ii. 16, 17, I answer, 1. That the apostle, Col. ii., speaks only of the Jewish ordinances, which are abolished, and not of the church ordinances now. 2ndly. If it be meant that all succession is from heaven, immediately, it is a phantasy: if, mediately, then must the outward succession, to wit of ministry, be in the outward church, whereof it is an ordinance. And whereas the church, and new creature are opposed, it is amiss, since the church is to consist only of such men as are in their measure renewed by the Holy Ghost, and sanctified: and if by the new creature they mean any other thing, it is a new creature of their own making.

SECTION XII.—ON MAGISTRACY AND OATHS.

In Conclusion 83, where the office of the magistrate, is called a "permissive ordinance of God," it is both a contradiction, and evil speaking of them in authority. Where it is called "an ordinance of God," it is confessed good,

Hosted by Google

for "every creature of God is good," and all his ordinances are his creatures; and so, many things are ascribed to the office of magistrates in this, and the other Conclusions about it, which prove it to be good, and lawful in itself: but where it is made "permissive," it is condemned as evil: since only evil is permitted, or suffered of God.

And where it is objected, Proposition 85, that Christ's disciples must love their enemies, and not kill them: pray for them, and not punish them, &c, I answer, that the godly magistrate may do both. Doth not God punish with temporary death those that he loveth? and why may not God's deputies, the gods upon earth, be minded as God herein? Psa. lxxxii. 1, 6. When the godly kings, and governors in Israel were commanded to execute judgment and justice upon the people for their transgressions, were they commanded not to love them, and not to pray for them? When Mr. Smyth in his sickness, tells his children, as it is in the end of the book, "that if he live, he must correct and beat them, not because he hates them, but because he loves them, as God did him," doth he not answer the objection, and show that those two may well stand together, as in the private father, so in the public father, the magistrate? Where again it is said that "Christ's disciples must with him be persecuted, afflicted, murdered," &c., and "that by the authority of the magistrate:" I do answer: that those things are not simply necessary for all persons, but as God calls men unto them. And second, both the Scriptures, and other stories do testify that godly magistrates themselves, have suffered these things for the Lord and his truth, and for well-doing: sometimes the inferior magistrates, by the superior, and sometimes the governors by the people under them. Instances we have hereof in Moses, David, Gedaliah, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, with Nicodemus, and others many more. Exod. iii. 11, 12, 15; Acts vii. 25; xvi. 2, 3; Numb. xiv. 2, 10; xvi. 1—3; 1 Sam. xviii. 8, 9, 12; Dan. vi. 3; iii. 12; John vii. 52; Tit. i. 5. And much it is that these men should acknowledge that magistrates are to be prayed for, and given thanks for, as the Scriptures teach, 1 Tim. ii. 1, 3, and that their ordinance is of God, and for the good of mankind, Rom. xiii. 1, in the works whereof they may

Hosted by Google

please God, 2 Kings x. 30 ; and in all these, that it is a good and lawful thing, for no unlawful thing is of God, nor pleaseth him, nor is to be prayed, or given thanks for, and yet for it should exclude them from the church, as not being Christ's disciples. Doth any good and lawful thing hinder a man from being Christ's disciple, unto whom all creatures and ordinances are sanctified, and pure? or are men to be kept out of the church for well-doing? Surely even as lawfully as to be received in for evil-doing. They add "that the magistrate is not to meddle with religion, or matters of conscience, nor to compel men to this, or that form of religion, because Christ is the King, and Lawgiver of the church and conscience." James iv. 12. I answer that this indeed proves that he may alter, devise, or establish nothing in religion otherwise than Christ hath appointed, but proves not, that he may not use his lawful power lawfully for the furtherance of Christ's kingdom and laws. The prophet Isaiah speaking of the church of Christ, foretells "that kings shall be her nursing fathers, and queens her nursing mothers:" which if they meddle not with her, how can they be? Isa. xlix. 23. And where these men make this, the magistrate's only work, "that justice, and civility may be preserved amongst men," the apostle teacheth another end, which is, "that we may lead a peaceable life under them in all godliness." 1 Tim. ii. 2. It is true they have no power against the laws, doctrines, and religion of Christ: but for the same, if their power be of God, they may use it lawfully, and against the contrary. And so it was in special foretold by John, that "the kings of the earth should make the whore desolate, and naked, and eat her flesh, and burn her with fire." Rev. xvii. 16.

This Mr. Helwisse frivolously interprets "of their spiritual weapons," which are no other than the spiritual weapons of all other Christians; besides that it is contrary to the clear meaning of the Holy Ghost, which is, that these kings should first use their civil power for the "beast" and "whore," and after against them to their destruction.

To conclude this point then; both these men, and Mr. H. especially, in his whole discourse about this matter, labours of the common disease of all ignorant men, in pleading against the use of the ordinance by the abuse;

Hosted by Google

which stands either in prohibiting anything which God hath commanded, or in commanding anything which he hath forbidden; as indeed he hath whatsoever he hath not commanded, either expressly or by consequence, in his religion and worship.

Lastly, It is not truly affirmed "that Christians must judge all their causes of difference amongst themselves, and may not go to law before magistrates, nor use an oath." For the first head is alleged 1 Cor. vi. 1, 7.

I answer that Paul doth not there simply forbid the saints going to law, but going to law under infidels; and that wronging and oppressing one another, when they should rather have suffered wrong, or at least have appointed some able men for arbitrators, to have ended things. Which course, when doubtful differences of weight do arise, the members of the church ought to take, and so to rest in their equal determinations. But what if none of the church can sufficiently judge of the things, or settle them in peace for after posterity? as it may well come to pass, in cases of inheritance especially, the matter may, and ought, quietly and peaceably to be referred to the magistrate's determination. His office being of God, God's people may have the sanctified use of any lawful work thereof.

Touching an oath. It is not the meaning of our Saviour, Matt. v. 34, 37, nor of his apostle James, v. 12, absolutely to forbid the use of it: and to restrain all speech to "yea and nay:" for then Christ had broken his own rule in his so usual asseverations of "verily, verily," or "amen," which are more than bare "yea and nay."

The meaning of Christ was to free the law from the corrupt gloss of the Pharisees, who taught that it was no binding oath, in which the name of God was not expressly mentioned, but the creature's only; as it was both his and his apostle's meaning to reprove needless swearing in ordinary communication. Christ our Lord professeth of himself "that he came not to destroy the law," or ten words, "but to fulfil it," Matt. v. 17: and having taken away the curse thereof by his death, to "write the same in our hearts," that we might also observe it, and so use God's name holily as a part thereof. Jer. xxxi. 32; Heb. viii. 10. We read

Hosted by Google

how God himself swore sundry times for man's confirmation and assurance. And is any man either more holy, or better to be trusted than he, that an oath should be either unholy or grievous to him? We have also for our warrant the examples of the holy patriarchs and prophets, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the rest, sometimes giving unto others, and sometimes taking oaths of them, which being done religiously, was also a part of, and sundry times put for the whole solemn worship of God; and the same, not ceremonial and shadowish, but moral and eternal. Isa. xlv. 23; Jer. xii. 16; Psa. lxiii. 11. And since strifes will always be amongst men, and those many times such, as in which no sufficient testimony by men, or other proof, can be had, an oath, wherein God is called to witness the truth, and to avenge the contrary, is always of use: which the apostle directly teacheth, Heb. vi. 10, "An oath for confirmation is unto men an end of all doubts." The lawfulness whereof the same apostle doth plainly confirm, by his own practice, "taking God for his witness," Rom. i. 9, and again, "taking God for a record upon his soul," that is to be revenged upon him therein, that he "lied not" unto them. 2 Cor. i. 13.

And thus much for this conclusion, wherewith I will also conclude the book; entreating of God through Christ, that all who seek his truth in sincerity, that in the knowledge and obedience thereof, they may please him, may both find the same, and with myself, mercy and forgiveness in all our errors and failings of this life, which how many they are no man knoweth, nor can know, while he knoweth but in part, as all men but do, whilst they live in this world and are absent from the Lord.

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google

THE

PEOPLE'S PLEA

FOR

THE EXERCISE OF PROPHECY,

AGAINST MR. JOHN YATES HIS MONOPOLIE.

BY JOHN ROBINSON.

"Follow after charity, and desire spirituall gifts, but rather that yee may prophesy."
1 Cor. xiv. 1.

PRINTED IN THE YEARE 1618.

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google

PREFATORY NOTICE BY THE EDITOR.

THE Rev. John Yates, B.D., was Fellow of Emanuel College, Cambridge, and subsequently minister of St. Andrews, Norwich. He was a Puritan, distinguished for his piety and abilities, and for whom Mr. Robinson entertained great respect. He wrote a treatise against "Persons Prophesying out of Office," or, what in modern times is designated "Lay-preaching." The arguments of Mr. Yates were copied out, and, when duly attested, were forwarded to Mr. Robinson, at Leyden, by a person whom he designates by the initials W. E.* On reading them, the solicitudes of the expatriated minister of Norwich were revived, and he resolved on publishing, for the benefit of his former friends in that city, a Defence both of Lay-preaching in general, as a substitute for official ministrations when such could not be obtained, and of the practice which was not uncommon among the early Independents, of allowing any gifted brother who felt disposed, to arise and speak at the close of the minister's discourse.

The "People's Plea" contains this Defence, and consists, first, of a summary of Mr. Yates' arguments, *seriatim;*

* Supposed to be William Euring, author of "An Answer to the Ten Counter-Demands propounded by T. Drakes, Preacher of the Word at H. and D., in the County of Essex. Printed in the year 1619. Of the history of Mr. Euring, nothing further is known. He appears to have been a pious, excellent man, zealous for the truth. He speaks of himself in his Preface with diffidence, and entreats his readers to bear with his "vnschollership," as he "had not been brought up among the Muses but Mariners."

Hosted by Google

secondly, of Mr. Robinson's reply to each argument; and, thirdly, of a general view of the whole subject, confirming, illustrating, and amplifying the arguments already adduced.

Lay-preaching has long been a controverted subject among various parties. The Congregationalists themselves have not always been agreed respecting its validity and expediency. Generally, however, it has been allowed and encouraged by them, as a means of supplying the lack of ministerial service.

Mr. Hanbury* has given an extended list of works on the subject, which were published shortly after the death of Mr. Robinson.

* *Vide* Historical Memorials, vol. i. pages 356, 357.

Hosted by Google

PREFACE.

To my Christian Friends in Norwich and thereabouts, Grace and Salvation from the God and Giver thereof.

THAT loving and thankful remembrance in which I always have you, my Christian friends, provoketh me as continually to commend unto God your welfare, so to rejoice greatly when I understand thereof, and especially that your souls do prosper. And as the prosperity of the soul is principally furthered by the zealous preaching of the gospel, so hath it been matter of unfeigned rejoicing unto me, to hear how God hath of late stirred up amongst you divers instruments, whose zealous endeavours he hath used that way, and covering in mercy what is evil of ignorance and infirmity on their parts (I hope) in their entrance and ministrations, doth bless what is of himself to the good of his chosen. But, as it falleth out in nature that the pure waters draw off the tainture of the soil through which they run, so with you, it seems, the pure truths of the gospel have suffered by some, too great mixture with sundry popish errors about the church and ministry, in and by which, they are propounded: and this more especially by Mr. Yates, a man of good gifts in himself, and note amongst you; pleading the cause of the whore of Babylon, the Church of Rome, as Christ's wife; and of Antichrist's clergy, as of Christ's ministry. And as this clergy's exhortation is not a little furthered by usurpation on the people's liberty, which it swalloweth up, and thereby swelleth above proportion, so in all his pleading for the one, he doth necessarily implead the other; and as

Hosted by Google

in other things, so especially in the exercise of prophecy, or teaching in the church by an ordinary gift; in which every one that is able, bringeth his shot (reckoning, share) in due time and order, for a joint feast of that heavenly repast, the Word of God.

The arguments in his writing, (sent unto me by W. E., with his consent, and that, before the magistrate,) I have set down word for word, and answered, and therewith confirmed what I have elsewhere published,* in justification of this exercise against his exceptions and answers, which being scattered, here and there, in his large discourse and divers of them divers times repeated, I have collected, contracted, and set in orderly opposition to their contrary arguments; and that without any the least wrong (to my knowledge) unto him or his cause; as, having left out nothing in his writing, which might seem to bring advantage to his purpose.

Now if any shall ask me why I have not rather answered Mr. Hall's large and learned volume against me,† and the general cause which I profess, my reasons are,—First, Because it is a large volume so full farced by him, as it seems, that he might prevent further answer. Secondly, His treatise is as much (and more immediately) against the Reformists, and their cause in the main, as against us and ours. Thirdly, The truth requireth not that persons but things be answered; and things in it know I none, not answered in my defence‡ against Mr. Bernard. Lastly, I do put as great difference between him and Mr. Yates, as between a word-wise orator, both labouring more, and being better able to feed his reader with the leaves of words, and flowers of rhetoric, than with the fruits of knowledge, as also striving rather to oppress the person of his adversary with false and proud reproaches, than to convince his tenet by sound arguments: and between a man sincerely zealous for the truth, and by his simple and solid dealing by the Scriptures, as Mr. Yates doth, giving testimony of his unfeigned love thereof. Which truth my

* *Vide* vol. ii. A Justification of Separation, pages 246—251.

† A Common Apology of the Church of England, &c. &c., by J. H. (Bishop Hall), 1610. Vol. ix. pages 375—480. Pratt's Edition, 1808.

‡ *Vide* vol. ii. A Justification of Separation, &c.

Hosted by Google

prayer to God is, that he, with myself, and all others so seeking it, may find, and therein accord in all things.

And for you, my Christian friends, towards whom, for your persons I am minded, even as when I lived with you, be you admonished by me (which I also entreat at the hands of the Lord on your behalf) that you carefully beware, lest in anything you fall from your steadfastness; but on the contrary, grow in grace, and in the knowledge and obedience of the Lord Jesus in his whole revealed will. And let me the more earnestly exhort you hereunto, by how much the contrary evil is the more both dangerous and common. A man may fall forward, and in so doing endanger his hands and face; but in falling backward, the danger is far greater, as we see in old Eli, of whom we read, that he fell backwards and his neck brake and he died. 1 Sam. iv. 18. And how common a thing is it for men amongst you and the whole land throughout, in their declining age to decline in grace, woeful experience teacheth; there being few old disciples to be found, who in their age do hold the same temper of zeal and goodness, which they had upon them in their younger times; this being one main reason thereof,—That the means amongst you are far more for conversion than preservation; and for birth than nourishment: whereas they (by the Lord's gracious dispensation in the orderly state of things) who are planted in the house of the Lord, in the courts of our God, shall flourish, yea, shall sprout, in old age, and are fat and green, to show that the Lord is just and with him is none unrighteousness. Psa. xcii. 13—15. Of this grace, he who is the author and finisher of our faith, make both you and us partakers always. Amen.

Hosted by Google

AN ANSWER

TO THE

ARGUMENTS LAID DOWN BY MR. JOHN YATES,

PREACHER IN NORWICH,

TO PROVE ORDINARY PROPHECY IN PUBLIC, OUT OF OFFICE, UNLAWFUL;

ANSWERED BY JOHN ROBINSON.

Argument First.—Mr. J. Yates.

"From the commission of Christ, John xx. 21—23, all prophecy in public is to remit and retain sins; and Christ grants this power to none but such as he sends, ver. 21, and ordains thereunto, ver. 22. But men out of office are neither sent nor ordained thereunto, therefore in public ought not to meddle with the power of the keys. I know the exception will be this, that many out of office have prophesied, the Scriptures approving it. I answer, an ordinary rule is never infringed by an extraordinary example, but ever by an ordinary. To marry my sister is incest, yet in Cain it was no incest, because the example was extraordinary. I may not steal; and yet it was lawful for the Jews to rob the Egyptians, because that was God's extraordinary permission. Extraordinary examples, as they make no rules, so they break none; but ordinary examples must ever follow the rule; and if they do not, they break it. Christ therefore laying down a perpetual rule of binding and loosing to all such as are sent and ordained, either by himself immediately or by such as he shall appoint thereunto, it must necessarily follow that any ordinary example will break this rule, if it be not framed accordingly; therefore, I constantly affirm that no ordinary prophecy

Hosted by Google

ought to be out of office. As for extraordinary, that cannot oppose this rule, because it is of another nature, and therefore is not to be limited within the compass of an ordinary rule. Secondly, I answer, that all the prophecies out of office were by the secret motion of the Spirit, which was warrant for all such as had no calling, by office, thereunto."

Answer.

That all prophecy in public (and in private also) is for the remitting and retaining of sins I acknowledge: but that Christ grants this power to none but to such as he sends and ordains by the commission given, John xx. 21, &c., I plainly deny, and require his proof. He should then grant it to none but to apostles; for the commission there given is peculiar to such, conveyed to them immediately from Christ, confirmed by the miraculous in-breathing of the Holy Ghost, and by them to be exercised and dispensed principally towards unbelievers; of all which, nothing is common to ordinary officers. As Christ then gives power of binding and loosing sins to the apostles there, so elsewhere to ordinary pastors. Eph. iv. 8—12. Elsewhere to the whole church gathered together in one, Matt. xviii. 17, 18; 1 Cor. v. 4; 2 Cor. ii. 6—10; and lastly, in other places, to every faithful brother, confessing Jesus Christ. Matt. xvi. 18, 19, and chap. xviii. 15; Luke xvii. 3. And since the power of binding and loosing sins is only by way of manifestation and declaration of the Word of God, the law, and the gospel; look unto whom the Word of God is given, unto him the power of binding and loosing sins is given, though to be used by divers states of persons after a diverse order, which order doth, in no sort, abolish the being of the thing, but only preserves it from confusion.

And where he takes it for granted that the examples for prophesying out of office, in the Scriptures, were extraordinary, as Cain's marrying his sister, and the Jews' (the Israelites he should say*) stealing from the Egyptians, his comparisons are without compass, and his affirmation

* The descendants of Abraham were not generally called "Jews" till after the return from the Babylonish Captivity. Calmet's Dictionary of the Holy Bible, Art. "Jews."

Hosted by Google

without truth. These their practices were against the light of nature, and moral law, then written in the tables of men's hearts, and afterwards written in the tables of stone, save as there was an extraordinary dispensation by the Lord of the law, and God of nature. But what like is there in this that a man, out of office, having received a gift of God (whether extraordinary or ordinary) by which he is enabled to prophesy, that is to speak to edification, exhortation, and comfort of the church, should so use the same good gift of God, in his time and order? What eclipse is here of the light of nature, or violation of natural honesty? If Mr. Yates had remembered the law which forbade men to plough with an ox and ass together, Deut. xxii. 10, he would not thus have yoked together things of so unlike kind.

And for the secret motion of the Spirit by which, in his second answer he affirmeth "that all prophecies out of office were," he speaketh both that which is true and against himself. For what were these secret motions of the Spirit, but the prophets' zeal for God's glory, and man's good? which also were sufficient on their part, for the use of the gift, whether ordinary or extraordinary; whether in men, in office or out of office, it was not material. So that for the use even of an extraordinary gift there was required (at least at all times) no extraordinary motion of the Spirit, but only that which was, and is, ordinary to them and us. God therefore for his own glory, and the good of his people, giving the gift, whether extraordinarily or ordinarily unto a man, he hath warrant sufficient from his zeal to God's glory, and man's salvation, to use the same gift in his time, place, and order. Of which hereafter.

Mr. Yates. Argument Second.

"From the execution of a public function in the church. Prophecy ordinary, is by preaching to bring the glad tidings of peace and good things to God's people; and this the apostle says is not warrantable without sending. Rom. x. 15. We must feed the flock because we are set over it, Acts xx. 20; to prophesy to God's people is an honourable calling, and none ought to take it upon him but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. Heb. v. 4. The place of

Hosted by Google

Judas is called a charge, Acts i. 20; the ministers are the light of the world. Matt. v. 14. Stars in the right hand of Christ. Rev. i. 20. John was a man sent from God. John i. 6. Christ sent his apostles in the midst of wolves. Matt. x. 16. I have not sent these prophets, saith the Lord, and yet they ran. Jer. xxiii. 21. As many as found not their genealogy to be from Levi (from Aaron he should say) were put from the priesthood. Neh. vii. 64. All these places keep us to an ordinary rule, and for all ordinary prophesying there can be no exception from it, without an open breach thereof; as for all your places of prophesying out of office, they are all of them to be understood of the extraordinary; which cannot be tied to ordinary rules. For so we should abridge God of his liberty: but we must beware of imitation, lest we become licentious."

Answer.

Here is a long harvest for a small crop. All that can be gathered hence, either by reaping or gleaning, is no more, than that no man may exercise a public function, or office of ministry in the church, without a lawful sending or calling from the Lord, by the means which he has sanctified, which, as it concerneth Mr. Yates well to consider of, especially reckoning, as he professedly doth, his genealogy from the Pope of Rome; so doth it not impeach our prophets at all, who have a lawful calling for the use of their gift, though not so solemn, neither need they, as they who are to exercise and fulfil a constant ministry and charge. But for the word "sending," which he so much urgeth, it must be known, that as all that teach lawfully, whether in office or not, are sent by Christ in respect of their personal gifts and graces, so ordinary officers are not sent by those who appoint them to minister, as were the extraordinary apostles sent by Christ, who appointed them. Sending importeth a passing of the sent from the sender to another; and so the apostles were sent by Christ to preach the gospel to the Jews and Gentiles; but so are not pastors sent by the church, which calleth them, unto others, but by her appointed to minister unto herself. They who were, in their time, apostles, were first called in their persons by Christ to be his disciples, that

Hosted by Google

as apostles afterwards they might be sent to minister: they who are pastors, are sent by Christ, first as members, or in their persons and personal gifts, that as pastors they may afterwards be called to minister. And that Mr. Yates may have for the calling of our prophets, whereon to insist, thus we practise. After the exercise of the public ministry ended, the rulers in the church do publicly exhort, and require that such of their own or other church, as have a gift to speak to the edification of the hearers, should use the same; and this, according to that which is written, Acts xiii. 14, &c., where Paul and Barnabas coming into the synagogue, the rulers, after the work of the ordinary ministry was ended (considering them not as apostles, which they acknowledged not, but only as men having gifts) sent unto them, that if they had any word of exhortation to the people, they should say on.

Mr. Yates. Argument Third.

"From the true causes of prophecy in the New Testament, which are two, either immediate revelation, or imposition of hands; the first is Acts ii. 17, and x. 44; the second, Acts viii. 17, and xix. 6. A third cause of public prophecy cannot be given; therefore, ordinary prophecy in public, out of office, being neither by immediate revelation, nor imposition of hands is unlawful. You may say the contrary, but it will be without all warrant of the Word."

Answer.

In this argument are sundry errors, logical and theological. And first, Why doth he not make Christ's breathing upon the apostles, John xx. 22, and the descending and sitting of the cloven fiery tongues upon them, Acts ii. 3, 4, causes of prophecy, as well as imposition of hands? Secondly, Imposition of hands is no cause at all of prophecy, to speak properly, as Mr. Yates should do, affecting the name of a logician. It is no natural cause; for to imagine that men took the Holy Ghost in their hands and reached it to others, were ridiculous; neither is it a moral cause, as in it there are propounded no arguments and motives of persuasion. It is,

Hosted by Google

indeed, no more than a sign denoting the person, not a cause effecting the thing. Thirdly, If it were a cause, yet should it not be made the member of a division opposed to revelation, but a cause or means subordinate unto it, as unto the end; since it served to the conveying of the Spirit, by which Spirit all revelation is, and by revelation, all prophecy—extraordinary by immediate revelation, ordinary by mediate—both which, then, were in the church, as is the latter now, even in men out of office, by means of their study, and God's blessing upon the same, else could there never be lawful office, pastor or teacher chosen in the church to the world's end. The gift of prophecy comes not by the office, but being found in persons before, makes them capable of the office by due means.

Mr. Yates. Argument Fourth.

"From distinction of spiritual gifts, administrations, and operations. 1 Cor. xii. 4—6. All these are to be referred to that general, ver. 1. Gifts, therefore, in this place must be but one kind of spiritual gifts, and be distinguished from the other two. The first, then, are merely gifts; the second, gifts and offices together; the third, rather the effect of a gift, than the gift itself; and, therefore, the Holy Ghost knowing how to speak aptly, gives more to the effect, than the cause; the work, than the worker; for, in truth, miraculous works exceed all the virtue that possibly can be imagined to be in a mere creature; and, therefore, it is only a passive belief, or faith, whereby man is rather a patient than an agent in the work. These three general heads are divided again, or rather exemplified by many particulars. First, ver. 8—10, all lay down a kind of spiritual gifts; 1, a word of wisdom; 2, a word of knowledge; 3, of miraculous faith; 4, of healing; 5, operations of great works; 6, prophesying; 7, discerning of spirits; 8, of tongues; 9, of interpretation. That some of these gifts are extraordinary, no wise man will deny; yet that I may prove them all extraordinary, consider three things: First, the cause; secondly, the effect; thirdly, the subject. The cause without all doubt is the Spirit; yet question may be of the

Hosted by Google

manner and measure. For manner, whether the Spirit alone, or the Spirit assisting our industry and pains. I say alone, because all these effects depend equally upon the same cause; and I have no reason to say, that prophecy should be more by my pains and industry, than strange tongues, or any other gifts: for then I should magnify the Holy Ghost in one gift more than another. That which is given by the sole operation of the Spirit is more than that which is come by, through ordinary pains. I bless God for his ordinary providence, where my hand goes with the Lord in any ordinary affairs. But wherein I find the Lord do for me where I had no hand, there I ought to magnify him much more. So in these gifts, if some were ordinary, some extraordinary, then the Spirit should not have equal praise in them all. The orator, proving Cæsar to deserve more praise for his clemency towards Marcellus, than all his famous victories, useth the manner of the cause to show it. 'In thy wars, O emperor! thou hadst captains and soldiers, virtue and valour, weapons and munition, &c.; but sparing Marcellus thou alone didst it, to thee alone it belongs, and all the glory of it.' So, if prophecy in this place, above all the rest, must come in for an ordinary gift, then may I say, 'O blessed Spirit, prophecy is thy gift! yet do I acknowledge thy ordinary blessing upon my labours in this; but as for strange tongues and the rest, I acknowledge they are thy mere gifts, without all pain and labour of mine; therefore the greater praise I give thee.' Were not this to diminish prophecy in regard of the rest, which the Holy Ghost prefers before them all? and, therefore, did show as great power in that gift as in any other. The manner, then, being all one in giving, the second question is, whether they were given in the same measure. I answer, No. Rom. xii. 6. And, hereupon, the apostle commanded that one prophet should be subject to another, and willingly yield place to him, that had the greater measure. I leave the cause, and come to the effects, which learned men cannot distinguish. I will show you my judgment, and follow it as you please. To the two first gifts is given a word, by words we express our meanings, therefore, the Spirit doth not only give a gift, but an ability and

Hosted by Google

power to utter that gift for the greatest good of the hearers. Brother, it is the part of a divine, to study for apt and fit words; and, indeed, when God hath given us learning by exceeding great pains, yet we find great imperfection for want of words. Now, here I learn that the Spirit of God did extraordinarily supply this want, by giving unto men excellent utterance of heavenly things. The first two gifts are wisdom and knowledge; wisdom is a holy understanding of heavenly things, with a prudent application of them to their several uses. Knowledge, or science, is an insight into divers heavenly truths, yet wanting that prudent application; these two gifts with a fruitful utterance of them, could be no ordinary gifts studied out by their own pains, but such as the Holy Ghost did immediately inspire into them. I should be very glad to hear that your congregations were full of these wise and understanding men, then I doubt not but you would the sooner recal yourselves. The three next gifts of faith, healing, and great works, are undoubtedly extraordinary, and were never to be obtained by any study of ours. For the four last, I doubt not but you will grant three of them extraordinary. Discerning of spirits was not by ordinary means, but extraordinary, as you may see in Ananias and Sapphira, Simon Magus, and others, which were seen by an extraordinary spirit. For strange tongues, I hope you will not stand in granting it, if you consider but the first original of them, Acts ii. 2—4, and for interpretation of these tongues, that was as difficult as the other: why should you now stick at prophecy, which I will plainly show is more difficult than both the rest? For how should either you, or I come to be able to prophesy, except there were some skilful in the original tongues, as likewise the helps of commentaries and interpretations? You see God appointed these as means to help us to prophesy; and where they are wanting, it is simply impossible for any man to become an ordinary prophet. Indeed, the Holy Ghost can supply the want of both these, and therefore will you, nill you, it must be granted that this prophecy was extraordinary. For take away the ordinary means of prophecy, and then the thing itself will cease. Now, you may plainly understand that the primitive church had not

Hosted by Google

these means of prophecy, that you see we have: they had not the original tongues translated, and therefore God gave men extraordinary gifts in speaking and interpreting them. See, then, I intreat you, how these two means being extraordinary, enforce you to yield the other of the same nature. Were it possible for you to become a prophet, wanting the translation of the New and Old Testament, as likewise all interpretations with which, now, through God's blessing the whole work is replenished? I know you will answer, and say No; then say, prophecy in the primitive church was extraordinary, because the Gentiles had not ordinary translations and interpretations of them."

Answer.

If I should follow Mr. Yates in his course, I should rather write one sermon against another, than bring an answer to an argument. Briefly then as I can, omitting other things to that which concerns directly our present purpose; his affirmation that the gifts mentioned, 1 Cor. xii., are only extraordinary, I do deny and answer his reasons as followeth, and, First: that, contrary to his unreasonable reason, we both may and ought to magnify the Holy Ghost more in one gift than another, since the same Holy Ghost worketh more excellently and for our good in one gift than in another. Secondly: as a further truth and more contrary to his strange assertion, that in some works of the Spirit, though not here expressed, in which the Lord useth our industry and care, he is infinitely more to be magnified, than in any whatsoever, the immediate and miraculous work of the same Spirit, wherein he useth it not; for example, in saving faith and repentance: for the working of which by his Spirit, God useth our careful hearing and meditation of his Word, the law and gospel. Thirdly: compare we even extraordinary gifts with extraordinary; we see that God used the industry, and pains of the extraordinary prophets, for the reading and meditating in and of the law, Dan. ix. 13, and of the latter prophets, of the former prophets' writings. Dan. ix. 2. As also of the apostles in the reading, knowledge and memory of them both; yea, even of the very

Hosted by Google

heathen authors whose sayings they sometimes quote in their prophecies or sermons, Acts xvii. 28; Rom. iv. 3—10; 1 Cor. xv. 33; Tit. i. 12; 2 Tim. iv. 13; the like industry or care not being required for the gift, or use of strange tongues, and yet did the Holy Ghost much more excellently utter itself in their prophecies and sermons, than in their tongues, as Mr. Yates oft and truly affirmeth.

Upon ver. 8 he rightly describeth wisdom, "a holy understanding of heavenly things, with a prudent application of them to their several uses and knowledge; an insight into divers heavenly things, yet wanting that prudent application, with the fruitful utterance of them;" but, that these could be no ordinary gifts, studied out by their own pains, but such as the Holy Ghost did immediately inspire into them, he barely affirmeth; and I think, singularly, but am sure, untruly. I marvelled what he would say to these two gifts of wisdom and knowledge, to prove that they could not be ordinary, and did expect some special reasons for his so singular interpretation; but, behold a bare bone of affirmation brought by him, without marrow, flesh, skin, or colour of proof. Wherein he is also the more blameworthy, considering that he cannot be ignorant, how the most judicious both at home and abroad, do understand these two gifts as meant of the two special qualifications of the pastor and teacher, ordinary gifts of ordinary offices; of which ministries amongst the rest ordained by Christ, the one Lord of his church, the apostle speaketh ver. 5, as ver. 4 of their gifts by that one Spirit. Which ordinary gifts, all lawful pastors and teachers, ordinary offices, then had, and besides them, many others not in office. And by the grace of God, some amongst us, and that by the help of nature, study, and prayer, and the blessing of God's Spirit thereupon; which blessing of God I will not deny to have then been for degree extraordinary upon men's weaker endeavours for their furnishing with these ordinary gifts; which makes nothing against our purpose. That the gift of faith is undoubtedly extraordinary, is said by him, but doctors have doubted of it. See for one, Beza, in his great annotations upon the words, both affirming and proving, that by faith is meant

Hosted by Google

an assent unto the doctrine propounded, which is an ordinary gift of the Spirit.

Where he makes no doubt, but we will grant that three of the four last were extraordinary, he but "threaps* kindness" upon us, as we use to say. That Peter's gift of discerning was extraordinary in the case of Ananias, Acts v., we confess, but not so in the case of Simon Magus, Acts viii., of whom he judgeth by his words, as of the tree by the fruit, in which he did notoriously betray himself to be in the gall of bitterness, to the discernment of any ordinary Christian. The gift of discerning both of doctrine and manners, is in a measure required of every Christian, Phil. i. 9, 10; 1 John iv. 1; Heb. v. 14; but is bestowed by the Giver thereof upon some more liberally; sometimes extraordinarily, as then upon some, in some cases; sometimes ordinarily, as both then and now on all such as had, and have more Christian discretion than other men.

That interpretation of tongues was as difficult as strange tongues immediately inspired, is not true. They who, Acts ii. 6—8, heard the apostles speak in their own tongue, and were able to speak the Jews' language then in use, might interpret these strange tongues unto the Jews without any extraordinary gift; as Mr. Yates hearing a glorious formalist speak much Latin in his sermon, can interpret that strange tongue of his unto the people, without any extraordinary gift of interpretation; and so might it well be in the church of Corinth with some, though the tongue were given extraordinarily.

Lastly, It doth not show plainly that prophecy was more difficult than strange tongues, though all were true which he speaks of the difficulty thereof. For, by all reason and experience, a man then might, and now may, become an ordinary prophet for ability, by ordinary helps; but so neither could, nor can he speak a strange tongue, as there meant, but by extraordinary inspiration. That simple necessity of commentaries and interpretations which he requireth for a man's becoming an ordinary prophet, I dare not acknowledge; of great use they are, but not of simple necessity; that prerogative royal of

* Threap—to insist upon a thing pertinaciously.

Hosted by Google

simply necessary, I would challenge as peculiar to the holy Scriptures; which are able to make the man of God perfect, fully furnished to every good work, 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17; but where he adds that the primitive church had not the original tongues translated, it is something for his, yea, and for the Pope's purpose also, if it be true, and that the church, especially some good space after her constitution, might be without the Scriptures in a known tongue. But how unadvised and unskilful is he in so saying! How detracting from God's gracious providence towards His Church! and how partial on the clergy's part, and against the commonalty of God's inheritance! For the thing then. The Old Testament was wholly translated by the seventy interpreters, at the instance of Ptolemy Philadelphus, King of Egypt,* into Greek, the mother tongue of the Corinthians; Corinth being in Achaia and Achaia in Greece, in which, the same tongue, they had also every part of the New Testament then written, as the most was. Which language was also so universally known throughout the whole world, by reason partly of the Greek monarchy under Alexander, and partly of the Greek learning at Athens, as that the apostle could write his Epistle in Greek to the Romans, though in Europe, as understanding the tongue sufficiently. Besides the Corinthians had had Paul's and other apostolical men's preachings and conferences amongst them a long time; which were incomparably better than all the commentaries in the world. And for the Corinthians' ability for this work, it is but reason we respect this apostle's testimony of them, which is, that they were enriched in all utterance and in all knowledge. 1 Cor. i. 5. In which two gifts as the ability for ordinary prophecy doth properly consist, so to appropriate them unto extraordinary prophets, considering the generality of the apostle's speech and drift, with other circumstances elsewhere observed, were to fetter them in unjust bonds of restraint.

And having thus wiped off his colours of reason, that the apostle, 1 Cor. xii., speaks only of extraordinary gifts, I will, by the grace of God, plainly show the contrary; and that he speaks of ordinary also. And first: in teaching,

* Josephus, Antiq. lib. xii. chap. 2; Iren. lib. iii. c. 24, 25.

Hosted by Google

ver. 3, that no man can call Jesus the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost, he points out a gift and grace of the Spirit, ordinary and common to all Christians; secondly, ver. 5, he speaks of diversities, that is, of all the divers and several ministries, ordinary and extraordinary, in the church under Christ the Lord; and ver. 4, of the several gifts for the same, and so necessarily of the ordinary gifts for the ordinary ministries then and now; thirdly, from ver. 8, where mention is made of the word of wisdom, and the word of knowledge, ordinary gifts of ordinary persons, both in and out of office now and then; fourthly, ver. 12, he compares the church at Corinth to a body having Christ the head, and each of them members for their parts: of whom, one had this gift, another that, given of God for their mutual good; but by them abused otherwise. Whereupon I conclude, except there were in Corinth no ordinary gifts in pastors, teachers, or others, of God given, and by them abused, that he speaks not of extraordinary gifts only; fifthly, ver. 28, after apostles and prophets, he mentioneth teachers, which were ordinary officers, and therefore speaks of ordinary gifts and teaching; as also, helpers and governors, who, what were they but deacons and elders? Or take the words as they are, "helps and governments," than which, what is now, or was then, more ordinary both in respect of ministry and gifts? Whereupon, I conclude with good assurance, that the apostle, 1 Cor. xii., treats of the gift of the Spirit both extraordinary and ordinary.

Mr. Yates. Argument Fifth.

"From comparison of prophecy and strange tongues, which are laid together through all the 1 Cor. xiv. ver. 1, prophecy is preferred before all other spiritual gifts, which cannot be ordinary: for no ordinary and common gift is to be preferred before all extraordinary and spiritual gifts. But, you will say, though it be not more excellent, yet it is more profitable. I answer, it is both more excellent and more profitable; for the apostle intends both extolling it for the end, which shows how good and excellent it is, as likewise for the use, making known the profit and benefit of it. That which is the best object of our desire, must

Hosted by Google

needs be the best; but, of spiritual gifts, prophecy is the best object of our desire. 1 Cor. xii. 31. Desire the best gifts, chap. xiv. 1. Covet spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy. Secondly: as it is the best to ourselves, so it is the best to others, as may appear by the whole chapter. Thirdly: all other gifts are given for the good of prophecy, and not prophecy for them. As it is the best gift, so it is the most profitable, as being especially for edification, exhortation, and comfort. But it may be you will object, Is not an ordinary gift of prophecy better than the extraordinary gift of tongues, or at least, more profitable? I answer, No. For the tongues, Acts ii. 3, 4, were more profitable to the church than ever was the ordinary gift of any men. But compare ordinary with ordinary, and extraordinary with extraordinary, and we grant prophecy the privilege."

Answer.

To this argument, he himself gives a sufficient answer in our name, only he sets it down something lamely; where, if it came in the full strength, it would easily withstand the force of his argument. For where he should say for us, if he spake out, that ordinary prophecy is more excellent than tongues, because more profitable; he makes us to stammer thus, though it be not more excellent, yet it is more profitable, it being most plain that the apostle prefers prophecy before tongues, because it tends more to edification of the church; according to which respect alone we are to measure the excellency of church ordinances, and so to frame the object of our desire unto them. But what speak I of more excellent, and more to edification, since the strange tongues as there used without an interpreter, were so far from being comparable to ordinary prophecy, for any good end or use, as they were on the contrary, most vain and ridiculous, as appears, ver. 11, 22, 23. That, then, which he brings for the commendation of tongues from Acts ii. 3, 4, is nothing for tongues as used at Corinth. The former were, as of simple necessity in themselves, and to the apostles, for the spreading of the gospel unto all nations, so then and there profitably used; but in Corinth, ambitiously

Hosted by Google

and profanely abused, which Mr. Yates should have observed, but hath not in his comparison. Lastly, I add, as a just answer to whatsoever he hath objected, that tongues considered in themselves, how rightly soever used, are not comparable for use; and so for excellency unto ordinary prophesying or preaching considered in itself; seeing that by it, as well as by extraordinary, saving faith is wrought, Rom. x. 14, 17; which none can say of strange tongues in themselves, without a strange tongue both from truth and sense; no, nor of any other spiritual gift. And as it doth not appear by the apostle's preferring of prophecy before tongues, that therefore the prophecy was extraordinary, so it appears unto me, by the Corinthians' preferring of tongues before it, that it was but ordinary, and therefore disregarded by them in comparison of the extraordinary and miraculous gift of tongues; whereas, had it also been extraordinary, immediate, and miraculous, most likely it would have carried with it, the like with the other, or greater regard in their eyes.

Mr. Yates. Argument Sixth.

"From exemplification, ver. 6, 'If I come unto you, &c.,' I hope you will grant that the apostle Paul had all those spiritual gifts; and therefore speaking of such prophecy as he had himself, he must needs speak of extraordinary. Likewise, he had the knowledge of tongues, and yet prefers prophecy before all his languages, though 'he spake more than they all.' Now the example in his own person, must needs set forth the general; and, therefore, if, in the general, he should speak of ordinary prophesying, and in the particular of extraordinary, it would prove idle; for an example is of the same kind with the general. Again, in bringing four particulars, he puts revelation first, as the cause of all the rest, which shows plainly he speaks of such prophecy as came by revelation, for revelation brings a man knowledge, and knowledge teacheth wholesome doctrine, and prophecy serveth to utter it."

Answer.

I do plainly deny the ground upon which he builds the whole weight of his argument, which is, that the example and the thing exemplified must be of the same kind.

Hosted by Google

How oft doth Christ exemplify the sufferings of his disciples by his own sufferings, and the sending of his apostles, by his Father's sending of him? Were they, therefore, of the same kind; their sufferings meritorious, and their sending mediatorious, because his were such? But amongst other evidences against him, wherewith all writings, divine and human, are stored, see one fitly pairing with this in hand. The apostle provoking the Galatians, chap. i. 6, unto just detestation of such as preached another gospel amongst them, takes an example from his own preaching, ver. 8: "But though we, or an angel from heaven preach another gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." As if he should say, I have preached unto you formerly justification by faith, without the works of the law of Moses; they now preach unto you justification by the works of the law joined with Christ, &c. He exemplifieth their preaching by his: were they therefore of one kind, both apostolical because Paul's was such? It is sufficient for an example, if it agree with the thing which it is brought to exemplify, in that for which it is brought. And so the coming of Christ to judgment is by the apostle exemplified by the coming of a thief in the night, 1 Thess. v. 2. Are therefore their comings of the same kind? or is it not sufficient that, being most contrary in their kind, they do yet agree in the adjunct of suddenness? So is it sufficient, if Paul's extraordinary prophesying, and the Corinthians' ordinary, agree in the adjunct or effect of profitableness or edification, which thing alone, the apostle in his exemplification hath respect unto. His observation about revelation seems true and good in itself, but shows not plainly that for which he brings it; no, nor hath so much as a plain show for it. For what show hath it of proof that he speaks of extraordinary prophecy, because it comes from revelation, except he takes it for granted, that there is in the church no revelation of the Spirit for teaching but extraordinary, or miraculous; which how can I grant, or he affirm? Of this more, in Argument 8.

Mr. Yates. Argument Seventh.

"From the fruition of spiritual gifts, 1 Cor. xiv. 26, hath

Hosted by Google

a psalm, that is, some admirable praise of God, or doctrine, that is, some worthy point of instruction, or a tongue, that is, can speak mysteries with admiration, or revelation of some secrets either for doctrine or prediction. Lastly, or interpretation, whether of tongues, doctrines, or Scripture: all these must needs be had either by the ordinary pains of the church, or by the extraordinary gift of the Spirit; you say, by the one, and I say, by the other: and that I agree more with the Scripture than yourself, consider but the distinction of the gifts, and their admirable matter. A psalm must needs consist of metre, which required art to compose it. Secondly: it could not, for the matter of it, but sound forth some worthy praise of God. Do you think the Corinthians did study the art of music, or likewise read some admirable Divine books to find out sweet matter to make their songs of? Alas, brother, give God the glory, it was no doubt some sudden motion of the Spirit, that did inflame the hearts of believers with some worthy matter of praising God. Doctrine, that is, laid down by our ordinary pains, is that which we usually give unto doctors, which after long study, and reading the Scriptures, is drawn to some profitable heads, pithily proved, and contrary errors refuted by it. I think in Corinth, there were none of these doctors, and yet I doubt not but they were as excellent; for such doctors as delivered these doctrines, had them after a more easy manner; even the immediate work of the Spirit. I hope without any further dispute you will yield that the having of a strange tongue was extraordinary, as likewise the revelation, and interpretation."

Answer.

Not to meddle with his description of a psalm, doctrine, &c., further than concerns our present occasion: The first, a psalm, was not so undoubtedly as he maketh it, some sudden, to wit, extraordinary motion of the Spirit, &c. The Scriptures rather insinuate the contrary, and that these psalms and spiritual songs were also, beside the psalms of David, and those then made by extraordinary motion, which I will not deny, even ordinary, and conceived by ordinary men and motions, Eph. v. 18, 19; Col. iii. 16;

Hosted by Google

James v. 13. The Scriptures are to be extended as largely, and to as common use as may be, neither is anything in them to be accounted extraordinary, save that which cannot possibly be ordinary, which these might be. For the finding out of sweet matter, they had admirable Divine books to read, even the wonderful Divine Scriptures. For music, as without doubt many in that most rich and delicate city were expert in it, so what reason he hath to require for the church singing then in use, such study and art, I see not, except it be because he dwells too near a cathedral church. He may see, for the plainness of singing used in former times (and before the spouse of Christ, the church in all her ordinances, was by Antichrist stripped of her homely but comely attire, and tricked out with his whorish ornaments) that which Austin hath of this matter. Confess. lib. x. c. 13.

For the second, which is doctrine, he but thinks there were no doctors in Corinth; but he may well change his thoughts, if he both consider how that church abounded, in the body of it, even to excess, in all knowledge and utterance, the doctors' two special faculties; as also, how this apostle, in this Epistle, ch. xii., ver. 28, affirmeth expressly, that God had set in the church amongst other officers, doctors or teachers: besides that, it is enough for my purpose, if there were any in Corinth, though not officers able by ordinary gift to deliver doctrine: which, considering the fore-signified state of that church, both in respect of Paul's ministry among them, and testimony of them, being in that city which was the chief of all Greece for government, (Greece also being the fountain of learning and eloquence) cannot I think be reasonably denied.

To yield you without further dispute, that revelation and interpretation were, viz. only, the immediate work of the Spirit, were in us, more courtesy than wisdom. For interpretation, I see not, but that either he himself who spake the tongue by an extraordinary gift, or any other man that understood it, having ordinary ability to interpret the matter delivered, both lawfully might, and in conscience ought so to do; except he would quench the Spirit both in respect of the extraordinary gift of the tongue, and or-

Hosted by Google

dinary gift of interpretation, but that the pastor or teacher might not do this by his ordinary gift, which is yet a fort, strong enough to keep us from yielding, were strange to imagine. Besides, let it be noted how the apostle, ver. 13, exhorts to pray for the gift of interpretation. Now, how a man might pray for an extraordinary and miraculous gift, which he wholly wanted, without an extraordinary motion, or promise, and merely upon the apostle's exhortation general, I see not, but would learn of him that could teach me.

Mr. Yates. Argument Eighth.

"From present revelation, ver. 30. In the verse going before is laid down in what order they shall prophesy, even as it was before for strange tongues: yet here is a further injunction and that is of silence, if anything of more weight shall be revealed unto another: why should the other keep silence if it were known before that this man should speak after him? If it were ordinary prophesying, and such as our pains and study brought us unto, then were it fit that we should have our liberty to go on and not be interrupted by another: but the apostle, upon the revelation to another even sitting by, enjoins silence to the present speaker, which if his revelation had been studied before, could not be any motive or persuasion why he should yield to the other, that is, now upon the sudden, to take his place: this were for one prophet to disgrace another: but the clear sense is to any man that will not wrangle, that because it pleaseth the Spirit to inspire one sitting by, with some more excellent matter, either in regard of the same subject or some other, the apostle enjoins silence."

Answer.

To his question, Why the former speaker should keep silence, if it were known before that a second should speak after him? It is easily answered; that even therefore he was to keep silence; that is, to take up himself, in due time, as being to think, in modesty, that the conduits of the Spirit of God did not run into his vessel alone, but that others also might receive of the fulness of the same Spirit,

Hosted by Google

to speak something further to the edification of the church. Especially sitting down in some appointed place which it should seem, ver. 30, and Acts xiii. 14, he that purposed to prophesy used to take, and which order I think the Jews yet observe in their synagogues. And where he adds, that if it were ordinary prophecy, and such as our study brought us unto, then were it fit we should have our liberty to go on, and not to be interrupted by another, which he also accounts a disgracing of the former; I would know of him whether it were not as fit, and much more, that the extraordinary prophets immediately inspired by the Holy Ghost, and who could not err, should have their liberty to go on uninterrupted? Is not this without all compass of reason, that the extraordinary prophet immediately inspired, should not have as much liberty to go on without being interrupted, as the ordinary, who might worthily deserve to be interrupted for speaking untruly or impertinently? Although I do not think that the apostle requires any interrupting of the former by the latter, which were rude if not worse, but only a convenient cession or place-giving to a second by the first speaker, as hath been said. Now the exception of disgrace to the former by the latter's speaking is well to be minded, that it may appear, how evil customs do infect the minds of godly men, so as they think it a disgrace that one should give place to another, to speak after him, further or otherwise than he hath done. But it was not so from the beginning: but since they, who under Christ, should be servants of the church, have been her masters, and have exercised this magisterial teaching now in use, where ordinarily, one alone in a church (divers others in divers places, better able than he, sitting at his feet continually to learn), must be heard all his life long; thinking it a disgrace, to have another speak anything further than he hath done: which was the very disease of the church at Corinth, wherein he that spake first would take up all the time himself; whereas he should in modesty have conceived, that a second or third, especially seeming provided to speak by seating themselves in the same place with him, might have something revealed further, or otherwise than he had.

Which revelation the apostle doth not oppose to fore-

Hosted by Google

going study, as Mr. Yates thinketh, but unto emulation, and study of contradiction: teaching that the Spirit alone must be heard in the church, speaking by whose mouth soever. And that there is in the church an ordinary Spirit of revelation; besides comfortable experience, these places amongst many others do clearly prove. Matt. xi. 25, 28 and xvi. 17; Eph. i. 17; Phil. iii. 15.

Mr. Yates. Argument Ninth.

"From vocation, ver. 29, 32, 37, these spiritual men are called prophets, and to imagine a prophet without a calling, is that which the Scripture will not endure; therefore all these prophets either had immediate calling from God, or mediate from men, or else they took it up themselves; the two first, we grant lawful callings, but this, intolerable. The servant of Moses says, 'Forbid Eldad and Medad to prophesy.' Numb. xi. 28. His reason was, because he thought they had no calling, which had been true if they had taken it up without immediate inspiration; but Moses, knowing that it was from God, wished that the like gift might be upon all God's people; so that those were true prophets for the instant, by an immediate call from God; and the text says, they added no further, showing, that as the gift ceased, so did they."

Answer.

It is true that spiritual men are called prophets, or rather prophets, spiritual men. What is it, then, that makes a spiritual man, but a gift of the Spirit? And what a prophet, ordinary or extraordinary, but the gift of prophecy, ordinary or extraordinary? Whereupon it followeth undeniably, that so many, with us or elsewhere, as have the ordinary gift or ability to prophesy, are prophets, though out of office. In this argument he hath made a snare, wherewith himself is taken unavoidably. Secondly, We affirm that our prophets have a calling, which I have declared formerly, not to make them prophets by condition or estate, for that, they are by their gift, but for the use or exercise of the same gift before bestowed upon them by the Lord, through their labour and industry. Of Eldad's and Medad's prophesying, we shall speak hereafter; only

Hosted by Google

note we, in the meanwhile, how Mr. Yates, and rightly, apportioneth their prophesying to their gift, as we do also ours, according to that of the apostle, "having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or a ministry, let us wait on the ministry." Rom. xii. 6, 7. They, then, that have a gift, must prophesy according to their proportion.

Mr. Yates. Argument Tenth.

"From distinction, ver. 37, the apostle from the whole church, turns himself to their prophets and spiritual men, showing plainly that these had some particular place above the rest; and he gives them special charge to observe the things he writes to the church, therefore, those were in some calling above others; and to imagine the contrary, is to run wide of the current of the whole scripture: to set men in public place without calling, is the same with confusion and disorder."

Answer.

This argument is founded upon the groundless presumption with the former: namely, that there is in the church no lawful calling for men able to prophesy, but by officing them. And for Paul's turning his speech to the prophets, ver. 37, it shows indeed that they were above the rest after a sort; and so they are with us rightly preferred before others which want that endowment of the Spirit, by which they are enabled to speak to the edification of the church.

The Confirmation of the Scriptures, and Reasons brought in my Book to prove Public Prophesying out of Office by an Ordinary Gift.

And before we come to examine Mr. Yates' answers to the scriptures by me produced, I desire the reader to observe with me these two things: First, That I do not affirm in my book,* that all the there alleged scriptures are meant of ordinary prophecy; but that the same is proved by them. Neither will he, I presume, deny, but that many

* *Vide* vol. ii., A Justification of Separation, &c., pages 246—251; and vol. iii., A Just and Necessary Apology of Certain Christians, &c., pages 50—53.

Hosted by Google

things are sufficiently proved from a scripture, by necessary consequence and just proportion, besides the particular properly intended in it. Secondly, That Mr. Yates so puts the question, as that it is hard to say whether he do me or himself the more injury: viz. whether the places prove an ordinary gift of prophecy out of office. For, as I do not say that they prove the gift, but the use and exercise of the gift bestowed by God, whether ordinary or extraordinary; so neither would he have denied, had he not leaped before he looked, but that others besides ministers have an ordinary gift of prophecy. Where the apostle requires of him that desires the office of a bishop, that he be apt to teach, 1 Tim. iii. 1, 2, and able to exhort with sound doctrine, Tit. i. 9, doth he not therein most evidently teach that the gift and ability to teach, preach, and prophesy, not only may, but must both be and appear to be, in the person to be called to the office of ministry? He that is not a prophet, or hath not the gift of prophesying or preaching (for by his gift he is a prophet, and by the use of it he occupies the place of a prophet) before he be appointed a pastor, is an idol-shepherd set up in the temple of God; neither doth the office either give, or so much indeed as increase the gift, but only gives solemn commission and charge to use it. The first scripture by me brought, is Numb. xi. 29, where Moses the man of God wisheth that the whole people of the Lord were prophets, "the Lord putting his Spirit upon them."

This place, saith Mr. Yates in his answer, speaks of the pouring out of the Spirit in an extraordinary manner, as may appear by the occasion of the speech, ver. 24, &c. Where also, in a tedious manner (as his manner is), he proveth the gift of prophesying given to the seventy elders to have been extraordinary, which, as I deny not, so neither needed he to have proved. But this I affirm, that hence is proved the lawfulness of ordinary prophesying out of office, by men enabled thereunto. And First, As Moses wisheth that all the Lord's people were prophets, the Lord giving his Spirit unto them; so the minister may, and ought to wish that the Lord would so bless the ordinary endeavours of his people now by his Spirit, as that they all might be prophets, that is, able for gifts to speak to

Hosted by Google

edification. The minister who desireth not this, envieth for his own, and the clergy's sake, which Moses would not, that Joshua should do for his. Secondly, Moses makes it all one to be a prophet, and to have the Lord putting his Spirit upon a man. Now if the Lord's so giving his Spirit unto a man, as that he be thereby enabled extraordinarily to prophesy, make him an extraordinary prophet, why should not, by due proportion, such a gift of the Spirit given by the Lord to a man, as by which he is enabled to prophesy ordinarily, serve also to make him an ordinary prophet? And so by consequence, if there be amongst us any, though out of office, so enabled to prophesy, or preach, what hindereth them from being prophets, even of the Lord's own making by his Spirit's gift and work upon their study and endeavours? And if they be prophets, then may they prophesy, which Moses also in that place insinuates; for in wishing that they were all prophets, he wisheth as well the use, as the possession of the gift. Mr. Yates may see a very learned man, Joh. Wolphius, in his Commentary upon 2 Kings xxiii., showing by this place, the liberty of private Christians that are able to speak, and teach not only in ordinary congregations, but even in most solemn councils.

The next place is 2 Chron. xvii. 7, where King Jehoshaphat sent his princes to teach in the cities of Judah, and with them the Levites, &c.

Mr. Yates accounts it a monstrous conceit that the princes should be public teachers, which, saith he, were only by their presence and authority to back the Levites: adding that the translation is mended by Junius and Tremellius, &c.; but if the Jews heard him, professing the knowledge of Moses and the prophets, so speak, they would marvel at his ignorance of a thing so frequent and evident in their writings; with whom it is, and ever hath been a received truth, that any of their (הכמים) or wise men, as they after the scriptures. Matt. xxiii. 34; 1 Cor. i. 20; Jer. xviii. 18, call them, may, and ought to teach in their synagogues without respect had to office: neither doth the translation of Junius and Tremellius by any necessity make for him: neither can it be set against me without violence to the original: from the simplicity whereof they do (with

Hosted by Google

due reverence unto them be it spoken) seem unto me something to turn aside in the 8th verse. Pagninus, the Seventy Interpreters, Jerome, and all our English Bibles, carry it directly to our sense. And if the conceit be monstrous that these princes preached publicly, it is not bred only in my brain: the very same scripture having been alleged very lately by the public professor in the University of Leyden, in a solemn assembly, as expressly proving it lawful for others than ministers to teach publicly. And because much weight lieth on this ground, which yet he thinketh very sandy and light, I will make it clear to all indifferent men's judgments, that these princes, and so others in Israel, and Judah, though no Levites nor church officers, might lawfully teach and preach publicly in the temple, synagogues, and cities.

First then, all princes, magistrates, judges, and governors, were bound to open, expound, and apply the laws by which they governed, according to the several occasions offered, otherwise, they ruled by tyranny and appetite; which laws, for all the administrations even of the commonwealth, were only the written Word of God: whereupon I conclude, that if to open, expound, and apply the Word of God, be to preach and teach, they then had not only power, but charge so to do.

Secondly, It may appear what these princes of Jehoshaphat, partaking of his power, were to do in this case, by that which he himself, and other godly kings have done. The sum of his most pithy sermon we have recorded, 2 Chron. xix.; unto the Judges, v. 6, 7, and unto the Levites, v. 9, 10, 11; as also his divine prayer unto God in the public congregation, chap. xx. 5, 6, &c. Likewise, the excellent sermon of king Hezekiah unto the priests and Levites in the very temple, 2 Chron. xxix. 4, 5, &c.; also of Nehemiah with others, teaching the people the law of the Lord, Neh. viii. 10, the kings and princes being as shepherds to feed the people, as by government, so by instruction in the law of their God. Descend we down lower, to the time of Christ, and we shall see this matter put out of all question. Do we not read everywhere, how the Scribes, Pharisees, and lawyers, did teach publicly amongst the Jews, of whom, yet many were no Levites, or church officers, but indifferently

Hosted by Google

of any tribe, Phil. iii. 5. And if it were not the received order in Israel of old, for men out of office to speak and teach in public, how was Jesus, the Son of Mary, admitted to dispute in the temple with the doctors, Luke ii. 46, and to teach and preach in the synagogues so frequently as he did? Matt. ix. 35; Luke iv. 16, 17; and how were Paul and Barnabas sitting down in the synagogue, sent unto, after the lecture of the law, by the ruler, that if they had any word of exhortation unto the people they should say on? Acts xiii. 14, 15.

But if any man shall answer that these were extraordinary persons, and so taught by an extraordinary gift, he speaks the truth, but to no purpose. For what was that to the order received in the temple and synagogues, and to the rulers thereof, who did not believe in Christ, nor acknowledge either his, or his apostles' authority; but only admitted them unto the use of their gift, as they would have done, and did ordinarily, any other men able to teach: as also the rulers of the synagogues of the Jews do at this day.

The third place is mistaken by the printer, in omitting only one prick, which was corrected in many copies, and might easily have been observed by the reader. For Jer. l. 45, it should be Jer. l. 4, 5. Mr. Yates, therefore, upon that scripture refutes his own guess and not my proof.

The fourth place is Matt. x. 1, 5, 6, where Christ calling unto him his twelve disciples sends them to preach the kingdom of heaven to the lost sheep of Israel.

His answer is, That the twelve apostles were called into office, and had their calling from the first election of Christ, but had a further confirmation after, and greater measure of God's Spirit to lead them into all truth, as a justice of peace may be put in office and yet receive a further confirmation, yea, and greater means to perform his place. I affirm, on the other side, (and shall evidently prove it, God assisting me), that these twelve were not actually possessed of their apostleship till after Christ's resurrection, but were only apostles elect, as you call him the mayor elect, who hath not the office of mayor committed to him of a good space after. Neither am I herein of the mind of the Papists, to put Mr. Yates out of fear, that Peter was not in office until Christ gave him charge to feed his sheep, John

Hosted by Google

xxi. 15—17, (which yet I am persuaded never Papist held of his apostleship, but of his primacy and universal headship, or bishopric) but of the same mind whereof himself is, in his first argument, to wit, that his commission apostolic was actually conferred upon him jointly with the rest. John xx. 22, 23.

Now if the commission apostolic were but then given, they were but then, and not before, actually apostles; except he will say they were apostles before they had commission, that is, calling from Christ so to be. I would now see how he can salve the wound which he hath given himself.

Secondly, After that the Lord Jesus had, Matt. xi. 11, preferred John the Baptist above all the prophets which were before him, he yet adds in the same place, that the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. The least, *i. e.* the least minister. In the kingdom of heaven, *i. e.* in the church of the new testament properly called, which began not till after the death of Christ, who lived and died a member of the Jewish church. The apostles, then, being officers of the church of the new testament, and kingdom of heaven, and not of the old Jewish church, it cannot be that they were apostles in act before Christ's death, except an adjunct can be before the subject, and an officer before the corporation in and of which, he is an officer.

Thirdly, Considering the ignorance of these disciples at that time in the main mysteries of Christ: of the nature of his kingdom, his death, and his resurrection, Matt. xx. 21; Luke xxiv. 20, 21, &c.; John xx. 9; Mark xvi. 14: as also, how utterly unfurnished they were of gifts befitting apostolical teaching, for which, as being an extraordinary dispensation, and that in the highest degree, extraordinary and infallible revelation and direction of the Spirit was requisite, wherewith they were but first, as it seemeth, sprinkled, John xx., and afterwards more plentifully filled at the day of Pentecost; they were as fit for an apostleship as David was for Saul's armour, which he could not wield or go with.

Fourthly, Besides, if they had the office of apostleship committed to them, Matt. x., how was it that they con-

Hosted by Google

tinued not their ministration in that office; but returning after a few days to their Master, Christ, continued with him as his disciples till his death? Christ Jesus did not keep a company of non-residents about him for his chaplains, as Mr. Yates insinuates against him.

Lastly, We are expressly taught, Eph. iv. 8, 11, when Christ ascended on high he gave gifts unto men, apostles, prophets, &c. The apostles then were first given actually at the Lord's ascension, and were before only designed to become apostles or apostles elect, but not ordained, nor possessed of any office: and therefore preached, and that with warrant from Christ, without office. The next scripture is Luke viii. 39, by Mr. Yates thus opened, Christ having delivered the man possessed, bids him go and show what great things God had done for him: and it is said he went and preached, that is, if it be to their purpose, by ordinary pains and study, he preached the gospel. And with pity upon us poor souls that cannot distinguish the publishing of a miracle, and the gift (he should say the work if he distinguished as he ought) of preaching: he addeth, that if Christ had minded to have made him a public preacher, he would first have taken him with him, and instructed him, and then have sent him abroad.

First, Let it be observed, that the word used by Mark for his preaching, *κηρυσσειν*, is the same word which is commonly used for the most solemn preaching, that is, by the apostles and evangelists.

Secondly, Christ bids him, Mark v. 19, go home and declare how great things the Lord had done for him, and had had compassion on him; and ver. 20, he is said to have published in Decapolis (Luke hath it throughout the whole city) how great things Jesus had done for him. Which he doing, what else did he but preach, publish, and declare the great love and mercy of God in and by Jesus Christ towards miserable sinners for the curing of their bodily and spiritual maladies?

Thirdly, Where he makes the publishing of the miracle, and the preaching of the gospel diverse things, and pities us poor souls that we cannot distinguish between them, as Christ bade the women of Jesusalem not to weep for him but themselves, Luke xxiii. 27, 28, so surely had he need

Hosted by Google

to pity not us herein, but himself in his so great mistaking. Are not the miracles of Christ, storied in the Scriptures, a main part of the gospel? and the publishing of them, a part of the preaching of the gospel? And when Mr. Yates opens and publishes a miracle of Christ, as this man did, doth he not as well, and as truly preach the gospel as at any other time? Let the wise judge who is to be pitied. To shut up this point, it is said, John xx. 30, that Jesus did many other signs, &c., and ver. 31, "But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." The publishing then of the signs and miracles which Christ did, is the preaching of faith in his name to salvation: which this man, therefore did, especially amongst them which were not ignorant of the law of Moses, and promise of the Messiah to come; which by his glorious miracles, done by his own power, and in his own name, he both declared, and proved himself to be. John v. 36 and x. 37, 38. And where he adds that Christ gave this man commission to do that which he did, but he admires who gave ours any such authority, I answer, Even the same Christ, as then immediately, so now mediately, by those unto whom he hath given authority under himself, for the ordering of the gifts of his Spirit in his church. And sufficient it is for the question between him and me, if it appear, as in this person, that Christ hath given commission to men out of office by an ordinary gift to publish, and preach in public the gospel of salvation. I do quote next in my book Luke x. 1, 9, which for that W. E. omitteth and leaves out, Mr. Yates thanketh God; but in truth he hath more cause to thank him for sparing him in a place which so pregnantly proveth the preaching of the kingdom of God by men out of office: except he can assign some new-found office, and the same but of two or three days' lasting as, ver. 17, to those seventy there sent.

We are in the next place to come unto John iv. 28, 29, 39, which he openeth and answereth with admiration, as the former place, with pity and compassion on this manner: "O simplicity, with contradiction to his own writing! Simplicity which cannot see between preaching

Hosted by Google

of the gospel and carrying tidings of a man that told her, to wit, the woman of Samaria, of all things that ever she did. Is not this, saith she, the Christ? But besides simplicity, here is contradiction; for says Mr. Robinson, and that truly, a woman is not suffered to exercise an ordinary gift of prophecy in the church; and shall the woman of Samaria serve your turn, that it is lawful for men to exercise such a gift?"

It is indeed my simplicity to think that the gospel, as the word importeth, is nothing else but glad tidings; and that to preach the gospel, is nothing else but to carry or bring glad tidings of Christ before promised, then come into the world. It is also my simplicity to think, since by the tidings which this woman brought, many of the Samaritans believed on Christ, in a measure, ver. 39, and that without preaching of the Word of God none can believe, Rom. x. 14, 17, that therefore she preached unto the Samaritans, the same Word of God in a measure also, and that as truly and effectually, as ever Mr. Yates did to his parishioners, though she went not up into a pulpit as he does. And that he may judge aright of this matter, let him call to mind that those Samaritans received the books of Moses, as did the Jews: and as they looked for the Messiah, or Christ promised to, and of Abraham: bearing themselves for the children of the patriarchs, and true worshippers of God, as they had been, ver. 20, 28, and being so prepared were easily made as regions or cornfields white unto the harvest, ver. 35. And so this woman, by declaring unto them that, by which this Jesus, the Son of Mary, proved himself to be the Christ or Messiah promised, preached faith unto them most properly and effectually, even that main point of faith, then in controversy both in Judea, and Samaria, and Galilee, and the countries thereunto adjoining; which was, that Jesus was the Christ. I suppose Mr. Yates hath not sufficiently thought of these things, and do hope, that in godly modesty, he will suffer himself to be better informed.

And for contradiction, between these two propositions: A woman may not teach in the church, and a woman may teach out of the church, or where no church is, as it was in Samaria, it must be by other logic than I have learned:

Hosted by Google

but he will then demand, as he doth, how this woman's preaching can serve my turn? I answer, very well, by good consequence of reason, thus, if a woman may lawfully teach out of the church to the begetting of faith, as this woman did, but not in the church, because she is a woman by sex: then a man, against whom that reason of restraint of sex lieth not, may lawfully teach both within, and without, the church. Of which consequence more hereafter.

Another scripture is, Acts viii. 1, 4, with chap. xi. 19—21, where it is recorded how all the church at Jerusalem were scattered abroad, except the apostles, and that they which were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the Word, &c.

Mr. Yates answereth, "that besides the apostles which were in office, there were seventy disciples, which Christ before his death had made labourers in his harvest; and therefore these might preach, or any other that had an extraordinary gift of prophecy: the one, by virtue of his office and gift together, the other, by commission from the Holy Ghost to exercise that gift which they had received on the day of Pentecost, or any other. But says your author, Compare this place with Acts xi. 19—21, and the truth will fully appear. I answer, it will fully appear against you: for Christ charged both his apostles, and likewise the seventy disciples, that they should preach to none but the Jews: and therefore it is sufficient that they had so many preachers in office already by the commission of Christ, to go through all those places: neither will I deny that there might be others whom the Holy Ghost immediately raised up to manifest the excellent gifts that were to be poured down upon the church in the primitive times."

His answer is very dark and ambiguous, but in which are contained sundry errors evident enough. First, He makes those of the dispersion, which went about preaching the Word, to be of the seventy disciples, Luke x., and others the like furnished with an extraordinary gift of prophecy; but seems to allow them for no officers, in the beginning of his answer, when he thus speaketh: "Besides the apostles which were in office, there were seventy disciples," &c., yet afterwards, in these words: "And therefore

Hosted by Google

it is sufficient that they had so many preachers in office already, by the commission of Christ, to go through all these places," &c., he bestows some office or other upon them. Secondly, He misseth in two scriptures, which, in his answer, he pointeth out; the former is Acts ii., where he gathereth, that others besides the twelve received the gift of prophecy extraordinary at the day of Pentecost. Second, (if I mistake not) is Matt. x. 5, 6, where he racks the edict of prohibition of Christ, laid upon the apostles, and, as he saith, upon the seventy disciples, of preaching to any but Jews, far above the reach thereof; even unto this time of the dispersion, whereas it reached only to the death of Christ, when the wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles was broken down; after which they were, by the express words of their commission, to preach to all people, beginning indeed at Jerusalem and tarrying there, till they were endued with power from on high, and so proceeding unto all nations, Luke xxiv. 47, 49, as it is also recorded, Acts xi. 20, that some of this dispersion preached the Lord Jesus to the Grecians in Antioch. Thirdly, It is plain by that which I have formerly said, that neither these seventy disciples, no, nor the twelve, were by Christ possessed of any office, before his death; no, nor yet furnished with any extraordinary gifts of prophecy: the evangelist, who knew well and is worthy to be believed, bearing also witness with me, that the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified. John vii. 39. Lastly, It is altogether unreasonable to imagine that they who were scattered, and preached abroad, being the body of the church at Jerusalem, excepting the apostles, were all officers; and little more reasonable to think that they were all extraordinarily endued with the spirit of prophecy. For, First, There is no circumstance in the text, leading that way; and to imagine extraordinary and miraculous things, without good evidence, is extraordinary licentiousness and presumption. Secondly, The only titles given unto them, are, all the church which were at Jerusalem; they that were scattered abroad; and again, chap. xi., they which were scattered abroad, some of them were men of Cyprus, and Cyrene, &c., nothing insinuating any office of ministry. Thirdly, Their preaching here and

Hosted by Google

there is only noted to be by reason of their scattering hither and hither through persecution, and not of any extraordinary gift and dispensation committed unto them. Fourthly, If they had been extraordinary prophets immediately and extraordinarily inspired, there had been no need of so speedy sending of Barnabas from Jerusalem to Antioch with supply, though he were a man full of the Holy Ghost, for so were such prophets, as well as he, Eph. ii. 20, and iii. 5. I conclude, therefore, as before, that these men's preaching was by a gift and liberty, common unto them and us. The next scripture is, 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11: "As every man hath received the gift, so minister the same one to another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth, that God in all things may be glorified," &c. "This," saith Mr. Yates, "is little to the purpose, only thus much would the apostle persuade, that we ought to be harbourers one of another, and that without grudging, because all that we have is given us of God, who hath left us not as engrossers of his benefits, but as good disposers to his glory, and our brothers' good?"

He that but vieweth the place without prejudice, cannot but see that the apostle would persuade more than so much; and that Mr. Yates doth injuriously inclose the apostle's words, ver. 10 with ver. 9, which, though they lie in common to both, yet belong much more to the verse following. Ver. 9, he exhorteth to hospitality, and ver. 10, riseth from that particular, to the more general use of all gifts or graces, and so ver. 11, bringeth, for example, two specialities. First, The gift of prophecy in speaking. Secondly, The ministering of the ability which God giveth, bodily or otherwise, in the church. Neither can the apostle's meaning without extreme violence be restrained to ver. 9, which speaks only of hospitality; which is, but the use or ministering of that one gift or grace of liberality. He saith in the 10th verse, "As every man hath received the gift;" that is, as one hath received this gift, another that, and every one some, so minister the same one to another; that is, so let every such person mutually in the bond of love, as ver. 8, communicate his gift; as good

Hosted by Google

disposers of the manifold grace of God; that is, knowing that every one, what gift soever he hath received, is but as the Lord's steward therein. Is liberality alone a manifold grace? and hospitality alone, the ministering of a manifold grace of God? To the ministering of a manifold grace, the apostle persuades, and therefore not only that we ought to be harbourous one to another, which is but the ministering of one grace.

Two other scriptures from the Revelation follow. The former is chap. xi. ver. 3, "I will give to my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth." This is meant, saith Mr. Yates, "of the two testaments, and the instruments that God should raise up to use as faithful witnesses against Antichrist: but what is this for an ordinary gift of prophecy? Surely in this, there is some extraordinary thing, because it is said God will give power, that is, give them life again, for Antichrist did kill these witnesses when he stopped the current of the holy Word of God, and shut the mouths of the ministers," &c.

His exposition I will not deny, nor need to fear, save as with great partiality on the clergy's part, he makes the ministers of the Word of God, that is, men in office, the only faithful witnesses against Antichrist; whereas the contrary is most true; and that in Antichrist's reign no church officer, as an officer, witnessed against him, but all for him: as both having their authority by him, and binding themselves to submit their doctrine to his censure. The persons indeed that were also officers, even mass-priests, monks, and friars, witnessed some of them, against him, but so did not their offices, or they in respect of them, which is all one, but rather with him, as advantaging his state and hierarchy. Something extraordinary I do with him acknowledge to have been in them, in respect of the order then prevailing, and of the bondage spiritual under which, all, both things and persons were: as also, of the degree of their ordinary both gifts and graces, to put them forth in service of the truth: but that these witnesses against Antichrist had any extraordinary or miraculous gift of prophecy, which he insinuateth and must affirm, if he will draw them from our part, is merely

Hosted by Google

imagined, both against experience and their own plea. But for the opening of this place, I refer the reader to our learned countryman, Mr. Brightman, where he shall find affirmed and proved, that these two prophets were the Holy Scriptures, and the assemblies of the faithful.

The other scripture is Rev. xiv. 6, where the angel flieth "in the midst of heaven having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people."

"By heaven," saith Mr. Yates, "is to be understood the visible church, and by the angel, the learned men that God had ever raised up in the midst of popery, to carry the blessed Word of God in the midst of heaven, that is, raised from the earthly corruption of Antichrist, but not as yet at the height of purity," &c.

As I do not conceive of any such mystery in these words, "flying in the midst of heaven," but only that these angels should roundly and clearly, especially in respect of former times, publish the gospel far and near, as is the flying of a bird in the airy heaven, or firmament, speedy and evident: so (that signified) I assent to his exposition, as being also no way prejudicial, but much advantageable to my purpose. For, if those learned and angel-like men were to publish the gospel in the midst of popery, and that, neither by any extraordinary or miraculous gift, nor by virtue of their office, then is public prophesying out of office by an ordinary gift approvable. The first part I hope he will easily grant; if not, let him name the man miraculously inspired in the midst of popery. For the latter, the office itself, or function, was no ministry of Christ's appointment, as being the office of a friar, monk, or mass-priest, so their power to administer it, was from or by, the Pope, as universal bishop: that is, as Antichrist. In respect then of the gospel which they preached, and of their personal gifts and graces, by which they were both enabled and provoked thereunto, they were angels of God; but in regard of their office and power ecclesiastical, and hierarchical, angels of Antichrist. Besides that, when they gave their clearest testimony against Antichrist, they were, for the most part, all excommunicated out of the Church of Rome: and so being no members, could not be officers of any church.

Hosted by Google

Whereupon I conclude, that the witness which they gave unto the truth, was but personal, and not ministerial, so far forth as it was of God, or by him approved. And thus it appeareth how, in the quoting of those scriptures, we have not offered abuse to God's Word, as he abuseth us, but have, with good conscience, as in the sight of God, noted them, as serving to prove lawful, public prophecy by an ordinary gift out of office.

Lastly, 1 Cor. xiv. comes into handling with the proofs thence taken; which, what weight they have shall appear after rehearsal of some more general considerations premised in my book, in the same place, for the better understanding of the point; as, first, "That the church of Corinth, above all other churches, did abound with spiritual gifts, both ordinary and extraordinary. Secondly, That they abused these gifts too much unto faction and ambition. Thirdly, That thereupon the apostle takes occasion, in the beginning of the xiith chap. and so forward, to draw them to the right use of these gifts of God, which was the employment of them to the edifying of the body in love. Fourthly, and lastly, That having laid down, in chap. xiii., a full description and large commendation of that grace of love, in chap. xiv., and the beginning of it, he exhorts to prophesying, and to the study and use of that gift; which though it were not so strange a thing as was the sudden gift of tongues, nor which drew with it such wonder and admiration, yet was it more profitable for the church, and though a matter of less note, yet of greater charity, which must bear sway in all our actions." Whereupon I lay down the first reason for brethren's (though no officers) liberty, in these words: "Because the apostle speaks of the manifestation of a gift, or grace common to all persons, as well brethren as ministers, ordinary or extraordinary, and that at all times, which is love; as also of such fruits and effects of that grace, as are no less common to all, than the grace itself, nor of less continuance in the churches of Christ, to wit, of edification, exhortation, and comfort: ver. 3, compared with 1 Thess. v. 11, 14."

In answering the former part of the reason, he is very large but more negligent, as appears in his denying that the apostle speaks of a gift, common to all persons; and

Hosted by Google

in more than denying, (for his rude term I will conceal for his credit's sake,) that it was common to all persons, at all times, admiring how I dare affirm any such thing: adding, that love was enjoined to all, but this gift only of such as did excel amongst them. Whereas, the very gift which I speak of in that place, or grace rather, as I there call it, was none other but the grace of love; as any that will may see in the reason, which general grace ought to manifest, and express itself in the edifying use of all the special gifts of the Spirit, which by it are set at work and moved, as the lesser wheels of a clock by the greater; and from which grace the apostle provoketh the church to the stirring up of the gift of prophecy, unto edification, as well now as then. And whereas, to my ground (as he puts it, and as after a sort I intend it, from ver. 3, compared with 1 Thess. v. 11, 14, viz. that since the end, which is edification, exhortation and comfort continueth, therefore the gift of prophecy also continueth,) he answereth: "That there are many means to effect one end, and yet some of them may cease, yea all of them, and others come in their room, as, for extraordinary gifts, ordinary; and so for apostles, ordinary ministers; instancing further, in tongues, which, ver. 26, are for edification:" he neither speaks so properly as is meet, nor (all admitted which he saith) takes away the force of the argument. Strange tongues, to speak properly and pressly, as in disputing, are no means of edifying the church; but the interpretation and application of the matter of the tongues: neither doth the office of the ministry in itself edify, but the use and exercise of it, in teaching and exhorting; no, nor yet the gift of prophesying, but as it is used in speaking: as ver. 3, "He that prophesieth," that is, useth the gift of prophecy, "speaketh unto men, to exhortation, edification, and comfort." There being, then, no other means to edify, exhort, and comfort in the church, but prophesying, the apostle, as appeareth by the two places set together, laying these duties, from the common grace of love, as well upon brethren as officers, ordinary as extraordinary, and at all times in the church, therein gives warrant to an ordinary exercise of prophecy in the church, by men out of office, to wit, having gifts and abilities answerable, to the end of the world. The

Hosted by Google

second argument is from ver. 21, where the apostle saith, "Ye may all prophesy, one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted:" he speaks of all's prophesying, as largely as of all's learning.

"This," saith he, "is absurd. Are all the church prophets? If all may prophesy, who shall learn? The Holy Ghost says all, but that is to be understood of such as have gifts; all ought to have the gift of hearing, but the like is not prophesying; and I say this gift was extraordinary, for how could all men study the Scriptures when they had them not in their native tongues?" It were absurd indeed if I thought that every person in the church were to prophesy, but why should he challenge me, or I purge myself of this absurdity? Whereas the contrary is most evident, both in the words of the question, which are, "that others having received a gift thereunto, may, and ought to stir up the same, and to use it in the church," and everywhere in the handling of it." By "all," then, I mean all that have gifts; and so take "all" for prophesying as largely, (yet in the subject, according to the received rule of expounding the notes of universality) as the other, "all" for learning. His question, "If all may prophesy, who shall learn?" is easily answered. For they who prophesy at one time, may learn at another. It is the disease of the exalted clergy, to scorn to learn anything of others, than themselves, and almost one of another. Where he further saith, that "all ought to have the gift of hearing, but the like is not prophesying," it is true, and that every particular person in the church is not bound to have the gift; but if he speak anything to the purpose in hand, he must go further, and say, that no ordinary brethren out of office ought to have the gift of prophecy; which if it were true, then ought none to strive for fitness to become officers: neither were the reproof just, which the apostle lays not only, nor so much, if at all, upon the officers, as upon the brethren, Heb. v. 12, "that for the time they ought to be teachers." Of his unworthy mistaking about the Scriptures not being in the Corinthians' native tongue, which he makes the only ground of his answer (I have taken notice) elsewhere.*

To conclude this argument. The apostle writing to the

* *Vide* pages 299, 305.

Hosted by Google

church of Corinth, "Ye may all prophesy one by one," cannot be understood of extraordinary prophets, except we conceive that the body of that church was, or might be, prophets extraordinary, and miraculously inspired; which, considering the super-excellency of that state by me elsewhere laid down, is a presumption above my reach, and least of all agreeing with Mr. Yates' judgment in his answer to the next argument, which is, that extraordinary prophecy did then begin to cease in the church.

The third argument is from ver. 34, where the apostle "restrains women from prophesying or other speaking in the church with authority, as also 1 Tim. ii. 11, 12: and in forbidding women, gives liberty to all men gifted accordingly; opposing women to men—sex to sex—and not women to officers: and again, in restraining women, shows his meaning to be of ordinary, not extraordinary, prophesying: for women immediately, extraordinarily, and miraculously inspired, might speak without restraint. Exod. xv. 20; Judges iv. 4; Luke ii. 36; Acts ii. 17, 19.

It is a piteous thing to see how Mr. Yates entangles himself about this argument, straining all the veins of his wit, if not of a more tender part, his conscience, to draw some force of answer upon it. That which hath any show of answer, either in that place, or any other throughout his tedious and perplexed discourse, I will relate and refute, confirming the argument clearly, as I am persuaded to any indifferent judgment.

His first answer, or exception is, "That it is most absurd to imagine that the Corinthian women did follow their study, and take ordinary pains to make sermons. Secondly, That extraordinary prophecy did cease; and that, not all at once, but first in women, and that the apostle therefore especially aims at them, as though, to wit, in their own judgment, the same measure were still upon them, as well as in former times, when Christ, that saves both man and woman, would extraordinarily manifest himself in both, yet first after a sufficient manifestation of his grace and goodness, he withdrew those extraordinary gifts from that sex, then afterwards from the other." His third answer, upon which he doth most insist is, "That the apostle forbids two general faults in the women; the one that they would pray

Hosted by Google

and prophesy uncovered, 1 Cor. xi. 5, imitating the Pythonesses and the Sibyls of the Gentiles in laying aside their veil, and spreading their hair against decency and comeliness. The second is, that in their husbands' presence they would be as ready to speak as they: and therefore the apostle, finding the women to abuse this gift, prohibits the use of it, whether simply or no, he cannot judge. Fourthly, He admires by what logic this will follow; women are forbidden to prophesy, therefore men have liberty; which," says he, "is an ill consequence."

In his first answer, or rather exception, he mistakes both the state of the question, and also the nature of the ordinance. The question is not of the study, or ability of these women, which yet I think was greater than he maketh account of, but of their forwardness to teach, which was certainly too great. And what consequence is this? The Corinthian women were not sufficiently furnished to teach by an ordinary gift, therefore they needed not to be restrained from teaching. Nay, therefore, they needed much more such bridle of restraint to be cast upon them; especially considering their mannish boldness and immodesty, insinuated against them here, by the apostle in part, but much more, chap. xi.

Neither, for the second point, are they that speak in the exercise of prophecy to make a sermon by an hour-glass, as Mr. Yates gathers: that, were to abuse the time and wrong the gifts of others; but briefly to speak a word of exhortation as God enableth, and that, after the ministerial teaching be ended, as Acts xiii., questions also about things delivered, and with them, even disputations, as there is occasion, being part, or appurtenances of that exercise. 1 Cor. xiv. 35; Acts xvii. 2 and xviii. 4. For the prophets' gifts and abilities then, as under the law, a "bullock or lamb that had anything superfluous or lacking in his parts might yet be offered for a free-will offering; but for a vow it was not to be accepted," Lev. xxii. 23, so, in this exercise of prophecy, as in a free-will offering according to the gift of God, that which is less perfect and exact may far better be accepted, than if the same were presented in the pastor's vowed service and ministration.

For his second answer. As it is true that extraordinary

Hosted by Google

prophecy did cease by degrees, so, is it not certain, but a mere presumption, that it ceased first in women: but most untrue it is that the apostle there aims at all at the ceasing of that gift in women. Ecclesiastical histories worthy of credit in this kind, do testify, that the stream of the Spirit was so far from being near dry at this time, as, that it ran a strong current well nigh a hundred years after, for all the extraordinary gifts thereof; as for the casting out of devils, foreseeing and foretelling things to come, healing the sick, and raising the dead, of whom, divers so raised, lived many years after; witness amongst others, Irenæus, adv. Her. lib. ii. c. 57, whom also for the same purpose Euseb., Hist. Eccl., lib. v. cap. 7, allegeth, and even for women. Evident it is by the Scriptures, that extraordinary prophecy in a very plenteous manner by them, and that, in the presence of men, continued in the church for many years after Paul's writing of this Epistle. "Philip the evangelist had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy," and that, in the presence of the apostle. Acts xxi. 9. Lo, four extraordinary prophetesses in one house, and the daughters of one man: so that hitherto the conduit of the Spirit of prophecy, kept his course as well upon their daughters as sons. Joel ii. 28; Acts ii. 17. So Rev. ii. 20, we read how the woman Jezebel, calling herself a prophetess, taught, and by teaching, seduced the Lord's servants in the church of Thyatira. In which place, as the errors and evils of the person are condemned, so is the formal order of the church manifested to be that women, prophetesses extraordinary, might teach. Lastly, The prohibition of women by the apostle is perpetual, and not with respect to this, or that time, as appears by the reasons thereof both in this place, and in the Epistle to Timothy, and such as equally belong to former times and latter: and no more to the latter end, than to the beginning or middle time of the manifestation of the grace and goodness of Christ.

What can be more absurd than to say that these reasons, "The woman must be under obedience, 1 Cor. xiv. 34, and not usurp authority over the man, but be in silence, because Adam was first formed, then Eve, and Adam was not seduced, but the woman," &c. 1 Tim. ii. 12—14, were not

Hosted by Google

moral and perpetual? Were not those reasons and grounds for women's silence in the church, without extraordinary dispensation by miraculous inspiration, of as great force seven years before, as when Paul wrote this Epistle? It is therefore most clear that the apostle aims not at all at any ceasing of the gift of extraordinary prophecy now going on, but at the universal and absolute restraint and prohibition of women's prophesying, not extraordinary but ordinary.

In his third answer he dealeth worse than in any of the other, in labouring to smother one truth under another. For albeit the women of Corinth were become so mannish as that they would prophesy uncovered and without their veil, the ensign of their subjection, yet doth not the apostle meddle at all with that malady in this place, but in the xith chapter of the epistle as himself noteth. Here, and in Timothy, he simply forbids the thing, there the manner of doing it. Likewise for their being as forward to speak as their husbands, and in their presence, it may be true in part, and in some. But what then? Doth the apostle in these places only forbid their speaking uncovered, and permit them to teach so it be veiled? or forbids he only their being as forward as their husbands, but gives them leave to speak in the church, so it be with good manners, and after them, which his answer insinuates? Or, is it not evident to all that will not shut their eyes, that he simply, and that severely prohibits them all speaking whatsoever in this exercise? Are not the words plain enough? "Let the women keep silence in the church, for it is not permitted to them to speak, but to be under obedience as the law saith." And again: "It is a shame for women to speak in the church," and in 1 Tim. ii. 12—14, "Let the women learn in silence with all subjection. And I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in subjection: for Adam was first formed," &c. Do not all and every one of these reasons bind women to all peace and deep silence in the church, yea, to such, and so absolute, as that they may not so much as ask a question for learning anything themselves, ver, 35, much less teach others anything? I therefore conclude this as a most certain and undeniable

Hosted by Google

truth, that the apostle speaks here of such a gift and exercise as women are simply forbidden to use in the church; and, therefore, not of an extraordinary gift or exercise which they might use lawfully, and did both before, and a long time after the writing of this Epistle.

His last answer now comes in consideration, which is that the "consequence is ill, women are forbidden, and therefore men are permitted to prophesy in the church by an ordinary gift."

If the consequence seem not good, why doth he so struggle as before, otherwise, to make an escape from the argument? Let us consider of the force of it, which appeareth to me irresistible in these three things. First, The apostle in, and for this work, opposeth the men to the women, sex to sex, and so in prohibiting women, he permits men. When the Holy Ghost, opposing faith and works in the case of justification, denies that we are justified by works, is not the consequence good, that, therefore, we are justified by faith? Where he opposeth believers and unbelievers in the case of salvation, and teacheth that believers shall be saved, doth he not teach, consequently, that unbelievers shall perish? If these consequences be not good, I must confess myself far to seek both in logic and divinity.

Secondly, The reasons of the prohibition of women prove the consequence, which are all such as prefer the men before the women, and subject the women to the men, in the church, and in this very work of prophecy of which he treateth. But now, if in prohibiting women, he gave not liberty unto men, where were the prerogative of men above women, which is the only ground upon which he buildeth his prohibition?

Thirdly, Where, ver. 34, 35, "it is not permitted for women to speak, but if they will learn anything to ask their husbands at home," if their husbands might not speak neither, nor any more than they, what reason can be rendered of the apostle's so speaking?

Lastly, Mr. Yates in denying this consequence, showeth, that so he might deny something he took no great heed what it were. The apostle in this whole chapter takes order for some to prophesy! And debarring women there-

Hosted by Google

from, either admits men to the use of that liberty, or else we must have some third kind of persons thought of which are neither male nor female.

My fourth argument is from ver. 29, and 32, "Let the prophets speak, two or three, and let the rest judge, and the spirit of the prophets are subject to the prophets." Whence I affirm that the apostle speaks not of extraordinary prophets or prophesying, since they in their doctrines could not err, and so were not subject to any such judgment or censure of others. He answereth roundly, though briefly, in this place, "that these prophets were not infallibly assisted:" and more largely in another place, "that such prophets as have an infallible assistance, are not subject to this rule, but others that had but, as the apostle said, Rom. xii. 6, meaner gifts, were to be examined according to the proportion of faith; so that extraordinary prophets might mix some of their own with the extraordinary gifts of God's Spirit, which was to be censured by such as had a greater measure: for none are to think that all who had these extraordinary gifts were free from error in their very doctrine. We see the strange gift of tongues was abused, and so might the rest be."

That one extraordinary prophet had a greater measure and proportion of gifts than another, I acknowledge, but that any one of them could err in doctrines, or was not infallibly assisted therein by the Spirit, I deny, as a most pernicious error, weakening the foundation of faith and truth of the Word of God: neither hath Mr. Yates so much as enterprised an answer unto the scriptures brought by me to prove the contrary: which were Eph. ii. 20, where the Ephesians as the household or church of God, are said to be built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, &c.; and iii. 5, where he speaks of the mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. Whence it appears that the church is as well built upon the foundation of the prophets, to wit extraordinary, which then were (for of them he speaketh) as upon the doctrine of the apostles, and they as infallibly, even for the very foundation, inspired by the Holy Ghost as the other. So that, if the prophets could err in doctrine,

Hosted by Google

then the apostles, and if in doctrine taught, why not written? and if one alone, why not more, or all? and if they might err, how know we that they did not err? If he say the meaner in gifts might err, but not the greater; first, the same followeth also touching the apostles, how much more touching the prophets before Christ, not comparable to those after him: why then may there not be errors in the writings, especially of those of meaner gifts, as without doubt some were, in comparison of the rest? What weather this wind will bring, who seeth not? Moreover, whereas we propound such interpretations and doctrines as we gather from the Scriptures by discourse of reason, and so may err; they on the contrary, every one of them delivered doctrine by immediate inspiration of the Spirit, in which by reason of the Divine impression which it made in their hearts, differencing it from all both human collection and diabolical suggestion, they could not err, nor be mistaken, but knew infallibly when, and wherein, they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Besides there is not like reason of strange tongues and prophecy for the consideration in hand, since the church is not built upon the foundation of strange tongues, as upon the foundation of prophecy. Neither was the matter of the speech inspired, but the language only; except the same persons were prophets also.

Lastly, If there were the like reason of tongues, and prophecy, yet, except men might err in a tongue, and deem themselves inspired extraordinarily when they were not (which were absurd to affirm), it could not evince any possibility of erring in doctrine by extraordinary prophets. The last argument of my book I take from ver. 37, 38: "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord: but if any be ignorant let him be ignorant."

Mr. Yates taxeth me for making a prophet and spiritual man all one, since by a spiritual man is meant such as excelled in any spiritual gift, prophecy, or other. But without cause, since I neither mean more, nor need more for my purpose, than that a prophet be included in the general of a spiritual man. But wherefore doth he not

Hosted by Google

answer the argument, or mind where the force thereof lieth? which is, in the words following, "Let him acknowledge that the things that I write are the commandments of the Lord. But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant." The extraordinary prophets were guided as immediately and infallibly by the revelation of God's Spirit, as Paul himself, and might as well have required of him to "acknowledge that the things which they spake were the commandments of the Lord," as he of them; neither was it possible that they, or any of them should be ignorant that the things which he spake were the commandments of the Lord. Which argument is also much strengthened, and made, in my judgment, unanswerable, by that which we find, ver. 36, "Came the Word of God out from you, or came it unto you only?" which words the apostle doth not direct unto the women (as Mr. Yates misconceiveth with great error, and contrary both unto reason, and the express Greek text, which will not bear it), but to the prophets with whom he dealeth, and that by way of comparison with himself from whom, to wit, by immediate revelation, the Word of God came after a sort to the Corinthians. Which plainly proves that they could not be extraordinary prophets, from whom the Word of God came unto the church as well as from himself, they being inspired immediately by the Holy Ghost as well as he.

The Christian reader may find besides these, other reasons from the scripture laid down by our worthy countryman, Mr. Cartwright, in his Confutation of the Rhemists, sect. 5, for the justification of this exercise, as ordinary and continual.

The other arguments in the same place of my book to the same purpose, though Mr. Yates could not but take knowledge of, yet hath he not thought good to meddle with. One of them only I will annex in this place, word for word, as there I have set it down.

It is the commandment of the Lord by the apostle, that "a bishop must be apt to teach, and that such elders or bishops be called as are able to exhort with sound doctrine and to convince the gainsayers." 1 Tim. iii. 2; Tit. i. 9. Now except men, before they be in office may be permitted to manifest their gifts in doctrine, and so in prayer, which

Hosted by Google

are the two main works requiring special qualifications in the teaching elders, Acts vi. 4, how shall the church, which is to choose them, take knowledge of their sufficiency, that with faith and good conscience they may call them and submit unto them for their guides? If it be said, that upon such occasion trial may be taken of men's gifts, he that so saith, grants the question; but must know besides, first, that men's gifts and abilities should be known in some measure, before they be once thought on for officers: and secondly, that there is none other use or trial of gifts, to wit in, and by the church, but in prophesying; for everything in the Lord's house is to be performed in some ordinance—there is nothing thrown about the house, or, out of order in it: and other ordinance in the church save this of prophecy is there none, wherein men out of office are to pray and teach, &c. Lastly, Mr. Yates, in denying this liberty, besides other evils reproveth the practice of all reformed churches and of the Church of England with them. It is not only permitted as lawful, but required as necessary where I live,* that such as have bent their thoughts towards the ministry, should beforehand use their gifts publicly in the church; and intolerable bondage it would be thought by them to have pastors ordained for them, as all there are unto the places in which they are to minister, of whose ability in teaching they had not taken former experience. And not only so, but it hath been further decreed in solemn synod, "that in all churches, whether springing up or grown to perfection, the order of prophecy should be observed according to Paul's institution; and that into this fellowship, to wit of prophets, should be admitted not only the ministers but also the teachers, and of the elders and deacons, and even of the very common people (*ex ipsa plebe*), if there were any which would confer their gifts received of the Lord to the common benefit of the church," &c. Harmon. Synod. Belg. de Prophetica, ex Synodo Embdana, Can. 1, 2. And for England itself what will Mr. Yates say to the "Common places," as they are called, or sermons, as indeed they are, in the colleges not only permitted unto, but imposed upon divers who never received orders of priesthood? What to such as preach by

* Leyden.

Hosted by Google

the bishop's licence without any such order? Yea, to all such as are ordained and called ministers, but have not actual charge, and so are like the popish accidents in the sacrament without a subject? Lastly, It might be shown if need were, that greater liberty than he alloweth is used by divers in the Romish Church, the spiritual Egypt, and house of bondage for God's people: so as the bondage of the very Hagar of Rome is not so great in this case, as he would bring upon Sarah herself.

The Lord give unto his people courage to stand for this liberty amongst the rest, wherewith Christ hath made them free, Gal. v. 1; and unto us who enjoy it, grace to use the same unto his glory, in our mutual edification. Amen.

FINIS.

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google

A TREATISE

ON THE

LAWFULNESS OF HEARING MINISTERS

IN THE

Church of England.

By JOHN ROBINSON.

1634.

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google

PREFATORY NOTICE BY THE EDITOR,

TO THE TREATISE AND THE TWO LETTERS WHICH FOLLOW.

THE first Congregational Church in London being without a pastor, the Rev. Henry Jacob, their minister, having recently emigrated to Virginia, wrote letters to the sister churches at Amsterdam and Leyden, soliciting advice on various points in which they were deeply interested; and particularly respecting their duty towards some members who had occasionally attended the services of the Established Church in England.

The letter to the church at Amsterdam occasioned much contention, and led to proceedings utterly at variance with the spirit and principles of the gospel. It would seem one of their number, who had formerly been transferred from Leyden, had been guilty of the offence of hearing the gospel in an English Church, and was obnoxious on some other grounds; he was therefore proceeded against as an offender, and, through the influence of a small party in the church, was, without being allowed a fair opportunity of vindicating himself, censured and excommunicated.

The church at Amsterdam, it would seem, wrote to Mr. Robinson and his people, to explain and justify their proceedings. But neither the pastor of Leyden nor his church were satisfied; and in their name he wrote the "Appeal in Truth's Behalf," in which he protests against their un-

Hosted by Google

scriptural proceeding, and declines all further consultation or conference with that church, having had in previous years much painful discussion and correspondence therewith.

"The Letter to the Church in London," in reply to their application, was written by Mr. Robinson six months previously to the "Appeal," in which he adverts to the proceedings at Amsterdam, and advises the London church by no means to reject those friends who, under some peculiar circumstances, had occasionally worshipped in the English Church.

He, moreover, wrote the "Treatise on the Lawfulness of Hearing the Ministers of the Church of England," about the same time. It was evidently designed for the press; but he died without publishing it; the manuscript was found in his desk after his decease. It was carefully preserved by the church for more than nine years. It is probable that a copy had been taken by some parties, with the intention of printing it when opportunity should offer.

The work was, at length, published by persons who designate themselves only as "the printers," and whose address "to the Christian Reader" states the reason of publication.

Internal evidence, furnished by the Preface, shows that these "printers" were intimately acquainted with the proceedings of the church at Leyden, and probably they had been actual members at Leyden, though it would seem they were now resident in London or Amsterdam. Learning that proceedings had lately been adopted in the church at Leyden, similar to those which had taken place at Amsterdam ten years previously, and against which Mr. Robinson and his friends had so earnestly protested in the "Appeal," and to which he had adverted in his Letter to the Church in London, they resolved to print the Treatise, that the deliberate opinions of their former pastor respecting the "Lawfulness of Hearing Ministers in the Church

Hosted by Google

of England," might be generally known, and to show that such an occasional practice ought not to be considered as a violation of Christian duty, nor a compromise or abandonment of Nonconformist principles, inasmuch as the mere hearing of a discourse in the Established Church was not an "act of church communion," and did not necessarily imply concurrence in the ecclesiastical views of the preacher, nor approbation of the National Church, as an institution.

The "printers" supply two or three objections and answers in their Address, additional to those found in Mr. Robinson's Treatise, stating that such objections had been urged by the factious party in the Leyden church, as a justification of their proceedings.

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google

THE ORIGINAL TITLE PAGE.

A TREATISE OF THE LAWFULNES

OF

HEARING OF THE MINISTERS IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND;

PENNED BY THAT LEARNED AND REVERENT DEUINE,

MR. JOHN ROBINSZ,

LATE PASTOR TO THE ENGLISH CHURCH OF GOD IN LEYDEN.

Printed according to the copie that was found in his studie after his decase, and now published for the common good.

Together with a Letter written by the same Authore, and approued by his church, which followeth after this Treatise.

"Judge not according to pearance, but judge righteous judgment."—JOHN vii. 24.

PRINTED ANNO 1634.

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google

THE PRINTERS, TO THE CHRISTIAN READER.

CHRISTIAN reader, however the very naming of the Author of this following Treatise were sufficient reason for us to publish the same unto the world, in regard of those large abilities above many others which the Lord had bestowed upon him; and in regard, he being now at rest with the Lord, and so having finished long since his course in this his pilgrimage, we cannot expect to have any more use of his help this way; and although it were great pity that such a work as this should be concealed for so long time, considering the work was perfected and written by his own hand, and so found after his death, which is nine years since, in his study, yet have we thought it good all this while to conceal it, in respect of that desire we had to the peace of that church whereof the Author of this Treatise was for so many years a pastor. In regard, we did perceive that some, though not many, were contrary-minded to the Author's judgment expressed in this Treatise; and this we judge to be a sufficient reason of our so long delaying of publishing this Treatise to the world: yet to our grief, we have now just cause to put this same on foot; for, as when a city is in danger of enemies to be surprised, it is then high time to take up all those warlike munitions which happily before that time were cast aside and not regarded, that so they may the better maintain their city and the privileges of it, against their enemies; so we judge it as necessary, if not more, when we see the enemies of God's church to encroach upon the privileges of the same, especially when they aim at the utter ruinating of it, that then it is high time for us to defend the cause of Christ: and it was the wisdom of Jehoiada, the high-priest, perceiving the malice of Athalia,

Hosted by Google

seeking to destroy the whole seed of Jehoshaphat, to hide Joash, the right heir of the kingdom, and when he saw a fit opportunity, then to reveal him and make him known; so we, who have observed Athalia's spirit in part, to be in some who have laboured to assume the power to themselves, which is proper to the church, and so Diotrephes-like, would cast out whom they please, and retain whom they thought good; and rather than they will be hindered in this their attempt, they will labour to rend that church in pieces in which they have lived for many years together; and that we may not seem to accuse them of anything without just reason, we desire the Christian reader and themselves to consider this that follows:—

First, Their schism, or, as they call, it their leaving of the church, doth arise upon this occasion: to wit, that two who are members of the same church with them, having upon some occasion heard some of the ministers in England preach, and it coming to the knowledge of some of these, who have now made this rent in the church, they would presently have these persons dealt withal as for sin, and if they did not repent after dealing, they would have the church proceed to excommunicate them, *ipso facto;* which the church not willing to consent unto, these men could not be satisfied, but they would have their own wills done, or else they would rent from the church, which proceeding of theirs, if it were approved of and followed, no church could long continue together in peace; for what these four or five men have done, that may any other man do: so that if any man do conceive any of his brethren to walk in any such sin, which he judges doth deserve excommunication, if the church will not thereto consent, he may rent himself from the same. Although the Author of this Treatise hath taught them otherwise, to wit, "that if the church see not that to be sin, which I see to be a sin, I, having informed the church thereof, according to my place, I have discharged my duty, and the sin lies upon the church, (if it be a sin,) and not upon me." But it seems these men do look for that in the church on earth which is only to be found in heaven; for themselves have affirmed, and that before divers witnesses, that there is no sin, small or great, that is to be borne withal, and that the very

Hosted by Google

speaking of a word, through frailty, about worldly business on the Sabbath-day, should have as severe a sentence as he that shall openly and profanely transgress against the fourth commandment; the very naming of which, their opinion, is sufficient to discover their weakness. And that we may yet further discover these men's folly to the world more fully, we will show you how contrary they are to themselves in this their judgment; for, as they say, and do affirm, there is no sin which is to be borne withal in the church, yet themselves, or at least, the chief of them, do practise the contrary: as for example—one instead of many may serve the term—The chief of the authors of this trouble doth hold, and so hath for many years together, to wit, that it is unlawful for the members of one church to have communion with another church, and yet, notwithstanding this his judgment, he can bear with one, who hath, contrary to this his judgment practised, and so professeth still to do upon occasion; and yet notwithstanding his so practising, and so professing, he is received among them, and is their chief, if not their only teacher which they have; so that we may here easily perceive that though this man doth use Jehu's pace against the sins of others with whom he desires to be alienated, yet he can bear with as great sins in others in his judgment, with whom he desires to walk. We could show many more reasons to prove his partiality, but then we should exceed the bounds of an epistle. Only we desire the reader to take notice of these two things—First, That this practice of hearing the ministers of the church of England is not against any article of faith which is by this church professed, whereof the Author of this Treatise was a pastor, it being no act of church communion; for, if hearing simply were an act of communion, then, every heretic or atheist, or whatsoever he were that should come into the church of God, should have communion with them, which if it were true, (as this following Treatise proves the contrary,) then it were good for every church that will avoid communion with profane men, to meet in private, and then to shut their door when their own company is met together: else I cannot see how they can avoid having communion with wicked men; to wit,

Hosted by Google

if bare hearing be an act of communion. Secondly, As this hearing is not against any article of their faith, so likewise, it was not in the judgment of the church esteemed as a thing that might not be borne withal; and this may appear by a copy of a letter which we have here following published, where the church, in the counsel which they give to the church of London, do sufficiently make it appear that their judgment did manifestly differ from that of those who now have made this breach; and, which is well to be marked by the reader, how that the church, when this letter was written, enjoyed the pastor; and their company was five times greater than it was when this breach was made; and because these men in this their error are willing to restrain it, and not being able to make any sufficient reply to the answer made in this Treatise to their objections, though the manuscript thereof hath been in their hands for many years; yet, because they will find something to say more than others have done heretofore, though of less force, therefore they have joined some new objections, which both the seducer and the seduced do think are unanswerable, therefore it will not be amiss for us to propound them, and to give some answer to them, that so if their stomachs serve they may reply to all at once.

First, They object, and say, that we hold the Church of England to be a false church, and the ministers thereof to be antichristian, and yet we go thither to worship the true God. Before we answer directly to this objection, we shall intreat the reader and themselves to consider of this that follows:

First, A church may be said to be false in divers respects, and according to those respects we are to have divers considerations thereof; as first, a church may be said to be false in respect of outward order, to wit, when a church is gathered together not according to the rule of Christ, neither in their outward government do they conform thereunto; now this church cannot be said to be the church of Christ being thus erected, and governed contrary to the rule of Christ, but is false and antichristian, and yet notwithstanding, the faith professed by this church, and the doctrines taught in this church may be sound and according to God.

Hosted by Google

Secondly, A church may be false, not only in respect of outward order, but likewise in respect of faith and doctrine.

Now to this latter we counsel no man to go, because from thence no good can be expected, and that is the esteem we have of the Church of Rome. But now, as in a true church, in respect of outward order, there may be many false doctrines taught, so, in a church that is false in respect of outward order there may be many sound and seasonable truths taught, and this esteem we have of the preaching in England: namely, that the doctrine there taught, according to the articles of their faith is sound, and the effects of it have appeared in the working of faith in the hearts of many thousands. For the outward order, or meeting there as a church, that concerns themselves, and those that are in union with that church estate, but not all that hear them.

Now that worshipping of God, which consists in hearing his Word, is warrantable for us to do in England, we prove it by this argument:

That preaching which ordinarily begets men to the faith of Christ may lawfully be heard.

That the preaching of many ministers in the Church of England hath, and doth, ordinarily beget men to the faith of Christ.

Therefore the preaching of many ministers in England may lawfully be heard.

The first part of this syllogism is proved out of Rom. x., where the apostle telling what is the ordinary way God uses to beget men to the faith of Christ, tells us it comes by hearing the Word of God preached; if faith comes by hearing the Word of God preached, to wit, if that be the outward means, then there is no question but that a man may hear such preaching, and any man may blush for shame that shall deny this: so that the major part of the argument is clear. And for the minor part they cannot deny it, no more than a man at noon-day can deny the sun to shine; for if any man make question whether faith comes ordinarily by the preaching and hearing in England, it is a great question whether they ever had faith or no, yet because some are so gross as to deny this, we will therefore prove the contrary by this argument:—

Hosted by Google

That preaching and hearing which make them who were altogether carnal, and so not capable of a church-estate, to become saints, and so fit for a church-estate: that preaching must needs beget men to the faith.

But the preaching and hearing in England made them that were unfit and carnal to become saints, and so fit members to the true church, which were not so before.

Therefore the preaching in England and hearing the same doth beget men to the faith. That the preaching and hearing in England hath done this, witness the church of Leyden, and of Amsterdam.

Let them tell us where they received their faith: if they say they had it not till they joined in these bodies, how could they then be true to their own grounds?—That none but visible Christians are fit matter for the church, whereas none can be so esteemed, except in the judgment of charity we judge them to have true faith.

But some of these that have made this division have not denied, but faith is wrought by the preaching and hearing in England, and yet, which is wonderful contradiction, they say it is not the Word of God, as it is there preached; so that it seems there is something besides the Word of God which is an ordinary means to beget men to the faith, and there is another word besides God's Word that will do it; the like absurdity hath seldom been heard from any that profess themselves to be Christians. And that they may not seem to say this without some reason, mark the reason that they bring to prove it: say they, We do deny that to be the Word of God, as it is there preached, by a false ministry, though the word itself be of God, yet as it is by them preached it is none of God's Word. So God's Word here stands at fast and loose: it is God's Word, and it is not God's Word; as if they should say it is God's Word, if Mr. Canne shall preach it, but if another that is a minister in England preach the same, it is none of God's Word; so that men's outward calling, true or false, makes the Word to be the Word of God, or not to be the Word of God, an assertion rather to be pitied than refuted, being little better than blasphemy. That which they bring to make this assertion good, to wit, that any man having an outward calling which is unlawful, makes the Word of God which

Hosted by Google

he preacheth not to be the Word of God. And this, say they, to prove it, It was true incense which Nadab and Abihu took to offer up unto the Lord, Lev. x. 1; but because they took strange fire, and not the fire which was from the altar, as the Lord had appointed, therefore the Lord sent a fire to destroy them: so say they it is the true Word of God which is preached in England, but because they preach the same by an unlawful office, therefore the Lord abhors it: a stranger collection, I think, can hardly be heard, for here strange fire is opposed to an unlawful outward calling, than which, nothing can be more absurd; for Nadab and Abihu had a true outward calling to offer; they were the sons of Aaron, saith the text; therefore if anything hence might be concluded, in just proportion, it must be to the doctrine taught, and not in the least to the calling; so that we may from thence gather thus much, that if a minister, in regard of his outward calling true, shall teach anything that is not from the Lord, they are to expect God's judgment for the same, and more cannot hence be collected; further, let it be shown that ever any prophet in the Old or New Testament was ever termed a false prophet in respect of his outward calling, but always in respect of his doctrine; we can find that such as had true outward calling in the true church, yet were false prophets in regard to their doctrine in many particulars, as Christ teaches concerning the Scribes and Pharisees, for their false expounding of the law, let them show the like for outward callings. Thus have we thought good, having been careful witnesses of these things here propounded, to set down our censure of them, desiring the Lord to make this whole work, for the general good now set forth, to take effect in those that love the truth.

Fare you well.

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google

ON THE

LAWFULNESS OF HEARING THE

MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

BY JOHN ROBINSON.

As they that affect alienation from others, make their differences as great, and the adverse opinion or practice as odious as they can, thereby to further their desired victory over them, and to harden themselves, and their side against them, so on the contrary, they who desire peace and accord, both interpret things in the best part they reasonably can, and seek how and where they may find any lawful door of entry into accord and agreement with others: of which latter number, I profess myself (by the grace of God) both a companion and a guide; especially in regard of my Christian countrymen, to whom God hath tied me in so many inviolable bonds; accounting it a cross that I am, in any particular, compelled to dissent from them; but a benefit, and matter of rejoicing, when I can in anything with good conscience unite with them in matter, if not in manner, or, where it may be, in both. And this affection, the Lord and my conscience are my witnesses, I have always nourished in my breast, even when I seemed furthest drawn from them: and so all that have taken knowledge of my course can testify with me, and how I have still opposed in others, and repressed in mine own people, to my power, all sour zeal against, and peremptory rejection of, such as, whose holy graces challenged better use and respect from all Christians. And in testimony of mine affection this way, and for the freeing of mine own conscience, and information of other men's, I have penned this discourse; tending to prove the hearing of the Word of God preached, by the ministers of the Church of England, able to open and apply the doctrines of faith by that church professed, both lawful, and in cases necessary for all, of all sects or sorts of Christians, having

Hosted by Google

opportunity and occasion of so doing, though sequestering themselves from all communion with the hierarchical order there established.

Three sorts of opposites I make account to meet withal. The first, of them who truly desire and carefully endeavour to have their whole course both in religion and otherwise framed by the holy and right seal of God's Word, either for their confirmation in the truth, or reformation, wherein, through human frailty they step aside. And unto them especially I direct this my discourse, begging at His hands who is the Father of lights, and from whom cometh down every good and perfect gift, James i. 17, for them as for myself, that as he hath given us to set our faces towards heaven, and to seek him with the whole heart, so, he would not suffer us to wander from his commandments, to the right hand or to the left. Psa. cxix. 10.

A second sort, is of them, whose tender and scrupulous conscience makes them fearful and jealous of everything which hath in it the least appearance or show of evil, lest coming too near it, they be defiled by it one way or other. This their godly zeal, and tenderness of heart is to be loved of all men, and cherished by all good means. Only such are to be entreated for their own good to take knowledge of a distinction most useful for their direction in things lawful in their kind, and good in their right use: of which some are only naturally good in their kind, but not simply commanded of God: as to get and keep the riches and credit of the world, to enjoy outward peace or other bodily comfort. Others are morally good in their kind, and commanded of God: as, to hear the Word of God, obey the magistrate, and the like. Now in things of the former sort, it is very requisite, considering both their nature and ours, that we keep a jealous eye and strait hand over ourselves, and our ways. For them, they are not in their kind enjoined as the other; neither do the Scriptures anywhere require of men to be rich or the like; as they do to hear God's Word, obey authority, &c. And for ourselves we are prone and in danger to overstrain for the getting and enjoying of them, as being naturally pleasing good things; so as if, out of a godly jealousy over our hearts towards them, we keep not ourselves from going

Hosted by Google

too near the side, for the getting or keeping of them, we shall by one storm of temptation or other, be blown into the ditch of sin and destruction. But now for the practice and performance of duties simply moral and commanded in their kind, as is the hearing of God's Word, especially by God's people, we ought to strain to the utmost, and to go as near the wind as may be; seeing nothing but apparent sin in the way, can excuse the withdrawing from it, when occasion of enjoying it is offered. Oh that there were not to found!—who being very scrupulous of coming near to anything amiss in outward ordinances, or to any person failing in them, yet make no scruple of complying and conforming with the world, so far in the eager pursuit of worldly profits, immoderate use of worldly delights, and fulfilling the lusts of the world, and flesh dwelling in them, as that there appears scarce a hair-breadth or difference between them and mere worldlings which know not God; which latter evils are both worse in themselves, as being expressly condemned by the law of God and light of nature, and more odious in the persons, as being more personal, free, and voluntary than those in the other, to which they are carried by the violent current of the times.

A third sort of opposites I make account to meet with, more untractable than the former, and more vehemently bent against the thing propounded by me, out of prejudice and passion, than the other by scruple of conscience or show of reason. To them I can hardly say anything, it not being their manner to read, or willingly to hear that which crosseth their prejudices, yet something I must say touching them, out of the woeful experience of many years taken of them,* though not much, I thank the Lord, amongst them, unto whom I have ministered.

Some of these I have found carried with so excessive admiration of some former guides in their course, as they think it half heresy to call into question any of their determinations or practices. We must not think that only the

* Referring doubtless to the contentious spirit of the church at Amsterdam in former years, and which produced division in the church itself, as well as led to Mr. Robinson's retirement from it to Leyden. *Vide* Bradford's Journal, quoted in Hanbury's Historical Memorials, vol. i. page 459.

Hosted by Google

Pharisees of old, and Papists of later times, are superstitiously addicted to the traditions of the elders and authority of the church. In all sects, there are divers, especially of the weaker sort, who being the less real in their conceptions are the more personal, that rather choose to follow the troad* of blind tradition, if beaten by some such foregoers as they admire, than the right way of God's Word by others to be shown them afterwards.

Some, again, are as much addicted to themselves as the former to others, conceiving in effect, though they will not profess it, the same of their own heads, which the Papists do of their head—the Pope—viz., that they cannot err or be deceived, and this especially in such matters, as for which they have suffered trouble and affliction formerly, and so having bought them dear, they value them highly. But it is too merchant-like, to strive to oversell a thing, which we have formerly overbought: we must buy the truth, and not sell it at any rate: but must account nothing either true or good, according to the valuation which we have set upon it, but God.

There is also a third sort highly advancing a kind of privative goodness and religion, and who bend their force, rather to the weakening of other men in their courses, than to the building up of themselves in their own: and in truth, rather to separation from men, not only in evil, but even in that which is good, for some other evil conceived in them, than to union with God, and his people, in his holy ordinances; and half imagining that they draw near enough to God, if they can withdraw far enough from other men. Great zeal they have against the false church, ministry and worship so being, or by them conceived so to be, and against any appearing evil in the true, but little for that which is true and good, as their practice manifests; but evil is as contrary to evil, as good is to evil; and so is that zeal plainly carnal, which carries a man further against evil than for good, seing no evil is so evil, as good is good.

Fourthly, There are some to be found so soured with moodings and discontentment, as that they become unsociable, and almost Lukanthropoi, (werewolfs,) as they speak. If they

* Trodden path.

Hosted by Google

see nothing lamentable, they are ready to lament. If they take contentment in any, it is in them alone whom they find discontented. If they read any books, they are only invectives, especially against public states and their governors. All things tending to accord and union any manner of way, are unwelcome unto them. They have their portion in Ishmael's blessing. Gen. xvi. 12.

Lastly, There want not who (as Jehu in his fierce marching covered his ambition, cruelty, and zeal for his own house, under the pretext of zeal for God's) think to cover and palliate their own both grosser and more proper and personal corruptions, under a furious march not only against the failings, but the persons also failing of infirmity, in matters of church order and ordinances, who, if they were well acquainted, and duly affected with their own both more voluntary and greater sins, would slack their Jehu's pace, yet turn their course, though not to walk with others in evil, which God forbid! yet to apply and accommodate themselves unto them in that which is good, so far as possible they could observe any way by the Lord opened unto them. I could instance and name divers particular persons monstrously grown out of kind this way; but that course I leave unto them who rather desire the disgracing, than the bettering of them against whom they deal: or perhaps conceive in their leavened hearts, that there is no other way of bettering, especially persons of mean condition, than by shaming and disgracing them. But let not my soul come in their secret, in whose habitations are such instruments of cruelty! Gen. xlix. 5, 6.

These things thus premised, the objections follow which I have either heard from others, or can conceive of myself, most colourable against the practice by me propounded. And they are of two sorts. Some of them are framed upon supposition, that the ministers in that church are in themselves lawful and of God, but not yet to be heard by reason of the abuses and evils to be found in their ministrations. Others withdraw hearing, and those the more, upon the contrary supposition, to wit: that the very order and constitution of that church and ministry is papal and unlawful. Now the examination of the grounds of the one or

Hosted by Google

the other I will not in this place meddle with, but, though both cannot be true, will for the satisfying of the withdrawers on both parts, grant for the present to either part their ground, and so examine distinctly what exceptions they can or do build thereupon.

But first for the former. Supposing a church and the ministry thereof essentially lawful, it cannot but be lawful for the members of other churches in general union and association with it, to communicate therewith in things lawful and lawfully done, seeing the end of union is communion. God hath in vain united persons and states together, if they may in nothing communicate together. But he, who would have us receive the weak in faith, whom God hath received, would not have us refuse the fellowship of churches in that which is good, for any weakness in them of one sort or other; and this we have so plainly and plentifully commended unto us, both by the prophets, yea, by Christ himself in the Jewish church, and apostles, and apostolical men in the first Christian churches, in which many errors and evils of all kinds were more than manifest, and the same ofttimes both so far spread and deeply rooted, as the reforming of them was rather to be wished, than hoped for; as that no place is left for doubting in that case, by any who desire to follow their holy steps in faith towards God, and charity towards men, and effectual desire of their own edification.

The objections of the former sort follow.

First objection.

"There is danger of being seduced and misled by the errors taught in the assemblies."

Answer.

First, We must not lose the benefit of many main truths taught, for danger of some few errors, especially in lesser matters. This were to fear the devil, more than to trust God. Secondly, There were in the Jewish church in Christ's time, and in divers of the apostolical churches afterwards, more and greater errors taught, than are in any, or all the churches of England: of which also there are not a few, which if their ministers did as fully and faith-

Hosted by Google

fully teach and practise all truths, as they keep themselves carefully from errors, might compare in this business with any reformed church in Europe. Thirdly, This exception hath its weight against the hearing of priests and Jesuits, especially by the weaker sort, and less able to discern of things that differ. But not against many ministers of the Church of England.* Matt. v. 23; 2 Cor. xi. 19; 1 John iv. 1, 3.

Second objection.

"He that in anything partakes with that church, in which sins known are suffered unreformed, partakes in all the sins of that church; as he that swears by the altar, swears by the offerings upon it, which it sanctifies. Matt. xxiii. 19, 20."

Answer.

I partake not in the sins of any, how great or manifest soever the sins be, or how near unto me soever the persons be, except the same sins either be committed or remain unreformed by my fault. Otherwise, Christ our Lord had been enwrapped in the guilt of a world of sins in the Jewish church, with which church he communicated in God's ordinances, living and dying a member thereof. If my brother sin a scandalous sin, and I by just order make complaint thereof to the church, I have done my duty. It appertains to the church to excommunicate him, if he repent not; but not to me except (Pope-like) I would make myself the church. I am guilty of the evil in the commonwealth and family, for the redressing whereof I do not my duty in my place, which, if I do in the church as I can, I am free from the sins done and suffered there, which sins and evils I can no more be said to suffer, wanting power to reform them, than to suffer it to blow or rain, because I hinder it not.

But the proof of the assertion from Matt. xxiii. is of admirable device. How doth the church sanctify the sin of the sinner, as the altar doth the offering of the offerer? The altar makes that to become actually an offering or

* *Vide* Parker on Church Policy, (De Politia Ecclesiastica) lib. i. cap. 39.

Hosted by Google

holy gift, which before was not an offering actually, but only gold, silver, or other material; so doth not the church make any man's sin to become his sin, which it was not before, but only suffers the sin that was. But to strain the strings of this imagined proportion, to make them meet, and to suppose the church in a sense to be as the altar, yet this only follows thereupon: that as he who partakes with the altar in the upholding of the offering, partakes with the offering; so he that partakes with the church in the upholding of any evil, hath his part in the evil also. And this I grant willingly, but deny as a most vain imagination, that every one that partakes with a church in things lawful, joins with it in upholding the things unlawful to be found in it. Christ our Lord joined with the Jewish church in things lawful, and yet upheld nothing unlawful in it.

Third objection.

"But this course of hearing will offend weak brethren, not persuaded of the lawfulness of it."

Answer.

First, It will offend more, and many of them weaker, and that more grievously, if it be not performed. Secondly, It is an offence taken and not given, seeing the thing is in itself good in its kind, commanded by God, and in that particular by men in authority; and directly tending to mine edification, and not like unto eating of flesh, or drinking of wine, or the like things of indifferent nature, and left to my free liberty to use or not to use.

And these are the principal objections on the former ground; they upon the latter follow:—

There is in the hands of many a Treatise published by a man of note,* containing "certain reasons to prove it unlawful to hear, or have spiritual communion with the present ministry of the Church of England." This hath been answered, but indeed sophistically, and in passion. Neither hath the answerer† much regarded what he said,

* Francis Johnson, of Amsterdam. 4to. 1608.

† Rev. W. Bradshaw, in his "Unreasonableness of Separation." Dort. 4to. 1614.

Hosted by Google

or unsaid, so he might gainsay his adversary. With that answer was joined another, directed to myself,* and the same doubled, pretending to prove public communion upon private, but not pressing at all, in the body of the discourse that consequence, but proceeding upon other grounds, and in truth consisting of a continued equivocation in the terms, "public licence," "government," "ministry," and the like, drawn to another sense than either I intended them, or than the matter in question will permit. Whereas, he that will refute another, should religiously take and hold to his adversary's meaning, and if, in any particular, it be not so plainly set down, should spell it, as it were, out of his words. But it is no new thing even for learned and godly men to take more than lawful liberty in dealing with them, against whom they have the advantage of the times, favouring them like the wind on their backs; but God forbid I should follow them therein! I will on the contrary use all plainness and simplicity as in the sight of God, that so I may make the naked truth appear as it is, to the Christian reader's eye, what in me lieth.

And, for the treatise mentioned, it must be observed how, both in the title and body of the book, the author confounds as one, "hearing of," and "having spiritual communion with, the ministry," &c., which, as it is true of such as stand in spiritual and political church union with a church and the ministry thereof, who accordingly have church communion in the public acts and exercises of that church, so is it not true of others who are not members of, nor in ecclesiastical union or combination with the said church.

For the better clearing of things, let us in a few words consider distinctly of religious actions, according to the several ranks in which they may rightly and orderly be set. Some such actions are religious, only as they are performed by religious persons; and of this sort is hearing, and so reading, of God's Word. The Scriptures teach, and all confess, that hearing the Word of God goes before faith; for "faith comes by hearing," as by an outward means, Rom. x. 17; 1 Tim. i. 5; Rom. x. 10; Gal. ii. 16, 20; hearing then being before faith, and faith before all other

* A Manudiction for Mr. Robinson, &c. 4to. Dort. 1614.

Hosted by Google

Second objection.

"To hear such a minister, is to honour, approve, and uphold his office of ministry."

Answer.

First, If this be simply true, then when the heathenish Athenians heard Paul preach; or, when an unbeliever comes into the church assembly, and hears the preacher, he approves, honours, and upholds the office of ministry, which—what it means he is altogether ignorant.

If any reply, But we know the ministry of the church to be as it is:—I answer, that the knowing of it, makes not our act the more or less an act of approbation. If I do an act wherein I indeed approve of a thing, if I know the thing, I really approve of it upon knowledge—if I know it not, I really approve of it but ignorantly. Secondly, If I approve of the office simply because I hear the officer preach, then, I much more approve of all the doctrines which he delivers, because I hear him deliver them. If the latter seem unreasonable, so is the former much more so, except I be in church communion with the officer, and then indeed I really approve of his office, as I also do of his doctrine, if it be according to the confession of faith made by me, for then I am in formal union with him in the one or other, and so have communion in the acts thereof. If this were a good ground, that every one approves of the evil done in matter or manner, where he is present, none could live with good conscience in any society of men upon earth. Persons so minded are best alone, for with others they will keep no peace, no, not with themselves neither, if they be true to their own ground. But they plainly balk themselves in their courses, either in weakness of judgment, or partiality of affection, or through want of due consideration of their ways.

Third objection.

"By this then it seems a man may be present at any act of idolatry, and do as others do, that practise idolatry, yet not approve of it. And so, the three nobles in Daniel needed not to have put themselves upon such pikes of danger

Hosted by Google

as they did, for not falling down as others did in the place."

Answer.

First, In the preaching of the truths of the gospel, no idolatrous act is performed, as there was. Secondly, It must be known that approbation is properly in the heart, and only the manifestation of approbation in outward gesture, speech, or writing. Both the one and the other are evil, if the thing be evil: but here it must be considered, that I may in cases, do the same outward act which others do, and wherein they manifest their approbation of idolatry, or other evil, and yet I be free, in truth and in deed from all such approbation and stain thereof. The Jews after Christ's death, and the taking away and abolishing the legal ordinances thereby, Col. ii. 14, circumcised their infants, and frequented the temple for purification, and other Mosaical ceremonies as parts of God's worship, and still remaining of Divine institution. Paul also circumcised Timothy, entered the temple for purification, and yet did not approve, any manner of way, the error and evil in the Jewish worshippers. To come nearer home. It is the custom in popish countries, that all that pass by a cross, must in honour of it, leave it on the right hand, as they may, by reason of the placing of it, coming or going. Now if I ride with others that way, I may do the thing that they do, and keep company with them, and yet not honour the cross as they do. It is besides the former, the manner that such as so pass a cross, should in further honour put off their hat to the said cross. But if I do this also, I plainly manifest an approbation of the superstition. The reason of the difference is, because I have another just cause to do the former thing, namely to keep on with my company, but have no just cause of the latter. But now suppose that at the very place where the cross stands, I meet with some friend or other to whom I owe that civil respect of uncovering my head. I may then do that lawfully also upon the former ground. So if I had just and reasonable cause either of coming and standing by the magistrate, to whom I owe this civil honour, whilst he is performing some act of idolatry in the streets or elsewhere,

Hosted by Google

I might upon the same grounds go and stand uncovered by him without just blame. To apply these things to the objection moved: seeing no other cause could reasonably be conceived of the king's commanding such a thing, or of their doing the thing at his commandment, save the worshipping of the idol, they in so doing, could not have escaped the just blame of idolatry. But now I have just causes more than one of my hearing, and amongst the rest mine edification, and therefore cannot be challenged therein to approve of the ministers' state or standing. Besides that, as I formerly answered, here is no idolatrous act performed.

Fourth objection.

"He that hears them preach, hears them as ministers of the Church of England, and as sent by the bishops; and so in hearing them, hears and receives them that send them, according to that of our Saviour, 'He that hears you, hears me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth me, and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me,' Luke x. 16; John xiii. 20."

Answer.

I grant the former part of the objection, and account the denying of it a point of familism, seeing the officers of public states in the executing of their offices, are to be esteemed, according to the public laws and orders of those states, and not according to any underhand, either course or intention, by themselves or others. They are heard as they preach, and preach as ministers of the bishop's sending and of the parishes receiving, to which they are sent by them. And so I profess I hear them as the ministers of the bishop's sending, and of the parishes sent to, but not as my ministers' either sending or sent to, except I be of those parishes, or at least in ecclesiastical union with them. Every one, whether of a false church, or of no church, or excommunicated from the church, that hears me, hears me as the pastor of the church which I serve, but not as his pastor, I suppose not in way of any, his spiritual communion with mine office of pastorship. Secondly, By "hearing and receiving," there, Christ means properly the

Hosted by Google

hearkening too, believing and obeying the doctrine taught by the apostles; which many despised, unto whom he opposeth the former that heard it. Now the ministers in the parishes, have not the doctrines of the gospel from the bishops as they have their office; but from God in his Word, and so far forth as a man hears, that is, hearkens to, and receives them by receiving it, he so far hearkens to and receives Christ.

Fifth objection.

"Yet such as hear them have communion with their office of ministry what in them lies."

Answer.

That is, they have nó communion at all with it, if it lie not in them to have any; as it doth not. If I hold up my hand as high as I can, I touch heaven with my finger, what in me lies. Do I therefore at all touch it? If such think to have, or that they have any such communion, it is their error and ignorance, but makes not the thing to be the more, than if they thought not so.

Sixth objection.

"Is there then no communion at all between the teacher and the taught? What profit then comes there by such hearing?"

Answer.

The church officer feeds the flock and church over which he is set, as the object of his ministry. Acts xx. 28. Such as come in, being not in church-union therewith, hear him so doing; and, as a stander-by, hearing me talk to, or dispute with, another, though I speak not a word to him, may reap as much, and more fruit by my speech, than he to whom I directed it, so may and doth it often come to pass with him, that hears the minister feed the flock whose minister he is, though he be no part of it; he may reap fruit by hearing him feed his flock, or seeing him minister baptism to any member thereof. Here is communion only in the effects of the truths taught. It were usurpation in any, to partake in a church privilege, which the

Hosted by Google

office of ministry is, that were not in a church state first. And so, if hearing simply, imported church-communion, none but church members might lawfully hear.

Seventh objection.

"In the true church indeed is order, that the church covenant go before church-communion: but not so in the false."

Answer.

In the true church there may be unlawful church-communion without a preceding church-covenant, as well as in the other, to wit, if an act of communion, properly, pass between the church, and him that is no church-member; as for example, participation in the sacraments. But hearing being not properly an act of communion, cannot import communion necessarily with the one, or other: nor otherwise than according to a foregoing church-union; whereas to partake in the Lord's Supper imports communion in both; lawful in him that is a lawful church-member, and unlawful in him that is not in such a church-state.

Eighth objection.

"But it is the order of the Church of England, that all that hear, are, and so are reputed, members of that church."

Answer.

I deny that there is any such order. Let the law or canon either be shown that so orders things. Excommunicates are permitted to hear sermons, though not Divine service, as they call it. Secondly, What if there were such an order? It no more either made or declared me to be a member there, than doth my dwelling in such or such a parish, make me a member of that parish church, which latter is indeed the law and order there. If the church with me should make a law, canon, or order, that all that come in and hear me preach should thereby become members of it, we were the more foolish in making such an order, but they never a whit the nearer, either for membership or communion.

Hosted by Google

Ninth objection.

"He that hears, appears to have communion with the church and ministry, and all appearance of evil is to be avoided. 1 Thess. v. 22."

Answer.

The Scriptures are not to be understood of all that appears evil to others, out of an erroneous and deceived judgment; for then we must abstain from almost all good, seeing there are some to whom almost all good seems evil; but it is meant either of the doctrine in prophecy of which I have some probable suspicion, of which the apostle seems properly to speak, or of that which appears evil to a rightly discerning eye. By this imagined exposition I might not hire a house in a parish where I were not known, seeing thereby I appear a parish-member.

Tenth objection.

"None can hear without a preacher, nor preach except he be sent, Rom. x. 14, 15; therefore I cannot lawfully hear him that hath not a lawful sending."

Answer.

First, That conclusion is neither in text, nor sound. I may lawfully hear him that hath no lawful calling, as I have formerly shown. Secondly, The apostle's meaning there is not to show what is unlawful, but what is impossible. It is impossible to believe without hearing, and impossible to hear without preaching, and impossible to preach without the sending there intended; that is, without God's gracious work of providence, in raising up of men, by enabling and disposing them to preach for the effectual calling of the elect of God, of which he there speaks. If any make question whether faith come by the hearing of the preachers there, it is more questionable whether they themselves want not faith, which are so barren of charity, in which true faith is fruitful. If faith come by the preaching in England to any, it follows thereupon, that such preachers are sent in the apostle's sense.

Hosted by Google

Eleventh objection.

"The sheep of Christ hear his voice; but strangers they will not hear. John x. 3, 8, 27."

Answer.

Christ doth not there speak of the outward hearing, but of the hearkening unto; that is, as he expounds himself, ver. 3—5, 14, 16, 27, of the knowing and believing of his voice and following it. So chap. ix. 27, "I told you before, and ye did not hear;" that is, not believe. And God hears not sinners, ver. 31, that is, approves not of them and their prayers. So chap. xi. 42, "I know that thou hearest me always," and a thousand times in the Scriptures. The drift of Christ in this place is, without question, to show the difference between such as were his sheep, and such as were not his sheep. His sheep heard his voice, and they which were not his sheep, heard not his voice. But they which were not his sheep, nor heard his voice as there he speaks, heard him preach outwardly, as well as the rest which were his sheep. Besides they which were his sheep, and would not hear strangers in the Lord's sense, heard outwardly those strangers preach, and by hearing them, discovered them to be strangers, that is, false prophets. The strangers of whom he speaks were of the true church, and of Israel, but brought false doctrine, tending to kill the soul. Such strangers none should hear, that is, believe and follow.

Twelfth objection.

"The Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament warn God's people of false prophets, which the ministers of that church are, having an unlawful calling."

Answer.

First, They warn not to hearken unto them, nor to believe them, but to try them, Deut. xiii. 3; 1 John iv. 1, which, without hearing them, cannot be done. Not that all false prophets are to be heard by all, that they might try them; for that were to tempt God: but I now answer the scriptures cited, which speak of prophets in the true

Hosted by Google

church, which were to be heard, till they were orderly repressed, or at least, plainly discovered by their doctrine heard to be such. Secondly, No man's unlawful outward calling makes him a false prophet; nor his outward lawful calling a true; but his true or false doctrine only, makes him a true or false prophet. A man may have a lawful office of ministry, and yet be a false prophet, if he teach false doctrine; so may he be a true prophet, if he teach the truth, though in an unlawful and antichristian state of ministry. Yea, Balaam was both a false prophet in cursing (in purpose) where God would have him bless, and in teaching Balak to put a stumbling-block before the people of Israel; and yet a true prophet in blessing Israel, by the spirit of prophecy, and word of the Lord put into his mouth. Numb. xxiii. 25; Josh. xiii. 22; 2 Pet. ii. 15, 16; Rev. ii. 14. He is a prophet that speaks or declares a thing past, present, or to come, Numb. xxiii. 5, 9, 10: xxiv. 2, 3, &c. And to prophesy in our sense is nothing else but to speak to edification, exhortation, and comfort. 1 Cor. xiv. 3. He that doth this is a true prophet; he that speaks the contrary, a false. It were good if they in whose mouths the challenge of false prophets is rifest, would better weigh how themselves expound and apply the Scriptures in their prophesyings, lest notwithstanding any outward lawful church-state, they be deeper wounded by the rebound of their accusations this way, than their adversaries.

Thirteenth objection.

"The Lord forbids Judah going to Gilgal, or to Bethel." Hos. iv. 15, 16.

Answer.

The meaning is plain, and the words express, that they were not to go thither "to offend, and play the harlot, in joining to idols," ver. 15—17. This I grant is to be done in no place; but deny any such thing to be done in the hearing by me pleaded for. The Scriptures everywhere forbid the going or coming to such places, or persons, as in, or by which some evil is done; to wit for the doing of anything evil, or unlawful in or with them.

Hosted by Google

Fourteenth objection.

"They that eat of the sacrifice partake of the altar, 1 Cor. x. 18, so they that receive the word from an unlawful officer, partake with his office."

Answer.

I deny the consequence. The office is not to the word, as the altar is to the sacrifice. The altar makes the thing to be offered, actually to become a sacrifice, which it was not before, save only in destination; as Christ plainly teacheth, saying, "The altar sanctifieth the gift." Matt. xxiii. 19. But so doth not the office make that to become the Word of God, which was not so actually before. This argument hath its special weight, being applied to sacraments, or proper institutions. The church and ministry under God, make, in a good sense, the bread and wine sacramental, in their use, which before they were not. And to the sacraments, specially the Supper of the Lord, the apostle, in the place cited, hath an eye, showing the proportion between the eating of the sacrifices in Israel, which in that use became their sacrament; and the eating of the sacrifices of the heathens, which were their sacraments; and the eating of the Lord's Supper, as the sacrament of Christians. With these things join in the last place, that sacrifices, considered as proper institutions, might not be offered or eaten, but in the place chosen, Deut. xii. 5—7, and sanctified by the Lord, for that purpose. No more may sacraments now be eaten, but in the church; whereas the Word may be preached to any as well out of the church as in it.

Fifteenth objection.

"The places called temples and churches, having been built for idolatry, should be demolished, and therefore are not to be frequented, specially, being accounted and made holy places. Deut. xii. 3."

Answer.

First, The difference of places under the law, when all other places for the most solemn worship, as opposed to

Hosted by Google

that one place as holy, were unholy, is now taken away; so as no place now is holy, or unholy as then. John iv. 21, 23, 24; 1 Tim. ii. 6. Secondly, Suppose it to be the magistrate's duty to destroy them, (of which I now dispute not, nor how far he should proceed therein,) yet I deny the consequence, and that I may not use that lawfully which he ought to destroy.

The magistrate ought to have destroyed such cities in Israel, Deut. xiii. 12—15, as whose inhabitants had been corrupted with idolatry. Yet might the cities, if spared by the magistrates, lawfully be dwelt in afterwards; and synagogues in them both be built and frequented for God's moral worship. Jericho should have been an execration and heap for ever, Josh. vi. 17, 26; 2 Kings ii. 3, 5; yet being built again and standing, was the seat of a school of the prophets. The murderer ought to be put to death; yet if he be spared and survive, his wife, children, and servants, lawfully may, and in conscience ought to converse with him, according to the natural and civil relations between them and him. Thirdly, I know no law in force, nor doctrine received, in the Church of England, that ascribes any holiness to the places. And for errors and abuses personal, they rest in the persons so erring. I suppose some such holiness to be ascribed unto them, as to holy churches, holy buildings, consecrated places, &c. Yet I see no sufficient reason, why I may not use lawfully a natural and civil place in them, for any lawful work, civil or religious, private or public; for there is one reason of all these. If any think those places like the Idolathytes, he mistaketh therein. The things offered to idols, and eaten in the idol's temple and feast, were in proportion, as the bread and wine, being blessed, in the Lord's Supper; as both the apostle, and reason of the thing manifests. 1 Cor. x. Whereas the place which I use, though for a religious action to be performed in it, whether in the temple, or in mine own house, hath only the consideration of a natural and civil circumstance. The temple as a temple (which yet I do not think is done in England, by any either received doctrine or law) may be made an idol by consecration; and yet every particular place in it not made unlawful for all uses.

Hosted by Google

If any further object, that, in preaching and hearing God's Word therein, we have a religious use of it, they err, not considering, that though the work done be religious, yet the place is no more religious therefore, than the time in which I do it. Time and place are natural circumstances, and without which no finite action can be performed; and some time and place more commodious and fit than others, for the doing of things of all kinds. I have no more religious use of the place in which I hear publicly, than in which I pray privately in my house or chamber.

Sixteenth objection.

"Seeing whatsoever is not of faith is sin, what word of God, and so of faith, is there for this practice?"

Answer.

Every scripture that either commands the hearing of God's Word, Matt. vii. 24, and promiseth a blessing to them that hear and keep it, Luke xi. 28; or that commands me to edify and build to myself, 1 Pet. ii. 5; or to obey the magistrate, Tit. iii. 1; or to follow after peace, Heb. xii. 14; or to prevent offences, 1 Cor. x. 32, warrants, and in cases, enjoins this practice, supposing no sin to be in the way, of which in answering the former objections, to which I suppose all other of weight or colour may be referred, I hope I have cleared it.

And for any unsatisfied, or otherwise minded, I wish I knew their reason, either for their good, by a sufficient answer to be given unto them; or for mine own, by admitting of them, as there may appear weight in them. In the meanwhile, let me entreat of the differently minded, one way or other, that they would exercise mutually that Christian charity one toward another, and compassion one of another's infirmities, which become all that will be in truth and deed followers of Christ Jesus; and which is most needful, specially in things of this kind, for the preserving of the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. Which bond of peace, whilst men are not careful to keep inviolated, by brotherly forbearance in matters of this nature, they miserably dissipate, and scatter themselves,

Hosted by Google

and one another; even as the ears in a sheaf are scattered, when the bond breaketh.

But as few or no good things of any kind are so well used by some, but others as much abuse them; so is it to be feared, that there will not want, who will change their lawful liberty this way into lawless licentiousness, and so take up instead of all other religious exercises, a hearing course only.

And those specially of them, who disliking the present church-state in England, yet want due zeal and love to that, which themselves approve,—let me turn a little my speech to such, for the preventing in some, and remedying in others, of that inordinate and broken course.

And first, I demand of such, What is this course of hearing such ministers, as whose state of ministry they approve not? Is it any particular ordinance left by Christ, and enjoined all Christians in all ages and places? Verily no. It were to be wished that no church-ministry were to be found, which is not approvable by the Word of God, notwithstanding any good act performed by them that possess it. This hearing is only a work of natural liberty in itself, as I have showed, and sanctified to believers by their faith. It is lawful to use it upon occasion, as it is to borrow of other men; but to make it our course, is to live by borrowing, which no honest man that can do otherwise possibly, would do. Yea, what differs it from a kind of spiritual vagabondry in him that can mend it, though with some difficulty, to live in no certain church-state, and under no church order and government.

To print deep in our hearts the conscience of our duties this way, let us briefly consider how many bonds of necessity the Lord hath laid upon us, to walk in the fellowship, and under the ordinances of the ministerial and instituted church.

First, We have lying upon us the necessity of obedience to Christ our Lord in the commission apostolical, enjoining, that after we be made disciples, as the word is, and baptized, we be withal taught to observe whatsoever he hath commanded, Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. It must not then suffice us, that we are disciples and Christians, but we must join herewith the entire observation of all the ordinances of

Hosted by Google

Christ, as we can find means, from the greatest to the least. And let us beware that, like the Scribes and Pharisees, we call none of God's commandments little, Matt. v. 19, 20, because we would make ourselves and others believe, that little and light account is to be made of observing them, lest we ourselves be called little, that is, be indeed none in the kingdom of heaven. Our sins of ignorance and human frailty, alas, are too many; let us not add thereunto presumptuous sins, either of commission or omission, to provoke God withal.

Second, The church and ministrations therein are not needless, but most needful means sanctified of God, and given of Christ for our salvation and edification thereunto, Acts ii. 47; Eph. iv. 11; which he that despiseth, that is, doth not submit his body and soul unto, as he hath means, and converse therein with good conscience, though in affliction and persecution, despiseth not man, but God and Christ, to the depriving of himself of the fruit of God's most gracious precious presence in his house and temple, where he hath promised to dwell, 1 Tim. iii. 15, and of Christ's ascension into heaven, for the pouring out of all kingly gifts and largesses upon men for the work of the ministry. 2 Cor. vi. 16.

Third, Our great infirmities, whereof both the Scriptures everywhere, and our own experience warn us, show in what great need we stand of all the Lord's holy ordinances and instructions, for the supplying of what is wanting in us, and correcting of what is amiss, and continuing and increasing of what is good, unto the coming of the Lord; where we must also take knowledge, and remember, that it is one note of difference, and the same very clear, between the wisdom of the flesh and the wisdom of the Spirit, that the former will be sure to provide for the body and outward man what may be, though with danger and prejudice of the spiritual; the other will take care and order for the spiritual state, though the outward, pinch for it. And if any, out of the view and persuasion of his own strength of grace, come to conceive, that he stands in no such need of Christ's ordinances, or of any Christian fellowship for the dispensing of them; let such a man consider, that the less need he hath of others by reason of

Hosted by Google

his greater plenty of grace received, the more need others have of him for their supply. But whatsoever any imagine of himself, the apostle, who was not partial, teacheth, that the very head, the chief and highest member, cannot say to the feet, the lowest and meanest members, I have no need of you. 1 Cor. xii. 21.

Lastly, It is necessary for our sound and entire comfort with the Lord our God, that our obedience be entire in respect of all his holy commandments, which we do, or can discern to be such, and to concern us; according to that of the man of God, "Then shall I not be ashamed when I have respect to all thy commandments." Psa. cxix. 6. That so we may have our part in the testimony given by the Holy Ghost of Zacharias and Elizabeth, which was, "that they were righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless," Luke i. 5, 6; that is, both in the moral precepts, and sacred ceremonies, and institutions of the Lord, whose example we, in our place and times are to follow, not balking with the Lord in anything, great or small, nor seeking starting-holes, whereby to escape from him, in his Word, which is wholly good and pure. Prov. xxx. 5; Heb. vi. 5. Good, as coming from our good God, good in itself, and good for us, if we converse therein as we ought, in good conscience towards God, zeal for his ordinances, modesty in ourselves, and charity towards other men, specially towards them with whom God hath joined us in the most and best things, taking heed lest, by any uncharitable either judgment of, or withdrawing from, their persons, for such human frailties as unto which, into one kind or other, all Adam's sinful posterity are subject, we sin not more by our course held against them, than they by theirs in them, which God forbid.

To conclude: For myself, thus I believe with my heart before God, and profess with my tongue, and have before the world, that I have one and the same faith, hope, spirit, baptism, and Lord, which I had in the Church of England, and none other; that I esteem so many in that church, of what state, or order soever, as are truly partakers of that faith, as I account many thousands to be, for my Christian brethren, and myself a fellow-member with them of that one mystical body of Christ scattered far and wide through-

Hosted by Google

out the world; that I have always, in spirit and affection, all Christian fellowship and communion with them, and am most ready, in all outward actions, and exercises of religion, lawful and lawfully done, to express the same; and withal, that I am persuaded, the hearing of the Word of God there preached, in the manner, and upon the grounds formerly mentioned, is both lawful and, upon occasion, necessary for me, and all true Christians, withdrawing from that hierarchical order of church government, and ministry, and appurtenances thereof; and uniting in the order and ordinances instituted by Christ, the only King and Lord of his church, and by all his disciples to be observed; and lastly, that I cannot communicate with, or submit unto the said church-order, and ordinances there established, either in state or act, without being condemned of mine own heart, and therein provoking God, who is greater than my heart, to condemn me much more. And for my failings, which may easily be too many, one way or other, of ignorance herein, and so for all my other sins, I most humbly crave pardon, first and most, at the hands of God; and so of all men, whom therein I offend, or have offended any manner of way; even as they desire and look that God should pardon their offences.

FINIS.

Hosted by Google

A LETTER

TO THE

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH IN LONDON.

By JOHN ROBINSON.

1624.

Hosted by Google

HERE followeth a true copy of a letter sent to London, written by the author of the former treatise, and read in public, and by the whole consent of the Church was sent to London, in answer to a letter sent by the Church of London to the Church of Amsterdam and Leyden; which we have thought good to print, only to let the world see what the Church's opinion was, of hearing in England: the contents whereof followeth.

Hosted by Google

TO OUR BELOVED IN THE LORD,

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN LONDON,

Grace and peace from God the giver thereof; and in him our loving salutations.

It may seem strange unto you, brethren, and that not without cause, that we should have deferred thus long our answer unto your letter, and as unseasonable, that after so long delay, we should now frame an answer. Our defence in the former case, is, partly, the other church's keeping the same so long in their hands, before they sent it unto us, and partly, their contentions arising about it, of which we both desired to see some issue, and hoped withal that by occasion thereof, we might come to communicate our counsels together, as we conceive by your joint letter, your desire to have been. But both in vain. For the letters then (partly, fearing lest we should seem to neglect you, and partly, hoping that some use might be made thereof for after times and occasions), we thought it better late than never to address this our answer: yet, so as you are, in the first place, to be entreated by the pastor of the church here, to take knowledge that he was not very willing to read publicly that, your letter, for two reasons. The one a lothness, that either strangers or brethren should take knowledge of that inordinate and lawless course held by such there, as both in regard of their years and learning, and especially of their place in the church, should have been an example to the rest in wisdom, sobriety, and Christian forbearance; especially in a case threatening division and dissipation; following therein Christ, our Great High-priest, who being touched with the feeling

Hosted by Google

of our infirmities, can have compassion on the ignorant. Heb. iv. 14; v. 1, 2. The true natural mother would not consent to have the living child divided, but the counterfeit was easily moved thereunto, how earnest soever she seemed to have it accounted hers.

Secondly, For that he conceives it not orderly that the bodies of churches should be sent to for counsel, but some choice persons. Power and authority are in the body for elections and censures, but counsel for direction in all affairs, in some few; in which regard every particular church has appointed its eldership for ordinary counsellors, to direct it and the members thereof in all difficulties; with whom others are also to advise upon occasions, specially ordinary. The priest's lips should preserve knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts. Mal. ii. 7.

These things premised, our general answer to the questions propounded by you followeth. You demand,—

1st. Whether you have done well in retaining her, (to wit, the maid about whom the difference was), she leaving practice according to her promise? Answer. We judge, that therein you did well, yea, though she had continued her practice upon occasion, and without neglect of the church whereof she was a member, how much more leaving it, as she did. Considering the action itself, the hearing of the Word of God, the great provocation she had thereunto, the state of the other church about which your next question is moved, and with all these, that excommunication is the heaviest censure which the church can inflict for the most heinous offence, most obstinately stood in, we deem it against that brotherly forbearance which the stronger owes to the weaker, so severely to censure a failing (so supposed) of that kind.

To their assertion that she was an idolater, having broken the second commandment, for that Mr. Jacob's people were judged idolaters in their going to the assemblies, and therefore from 1 Cor. v. 1, "If any called a brother, be an idolater," &c.; we answer, that here are divers consequences and collections, made without rule of charity, or ground of truth.

To grant, as the truth is, that many things in the

Hosted by Google

assemblies are against the second commandment, which forbids nothing but idolatry expressly, and by consequence whatsoever tends thereunto; and withal that Mr. Jacob's people did partake with divers of these evils, yet we deny to agree either with Christianity, or civility, in common course of speech, to challenge every such practice as the committing of idolatry, or such persons, as idolaters. The Lord Jesus teacheth, Matt. v. 21, 22, that all unadvised anger is against the sixth commandment, "Thou shalt do no murder;" is therefore every man that manifests upon occasion, any the least unadvised anger, to be challenged as a committer of murder or murderer? So by proportion, every less modest word, gesture, or fashion of apparel, is against the seventh commandment, "Thou shalt not commit adultery;" every wronging of another by negligence, improvidence, or partial affections, which every one, less or more, bears to himself, though but in a halfpenny, is against the eighth commandment, "Thou shalt not steal;" are all, therefore, so doing, to be pronounced and prosecuted, as thieves and adulterers? By these vain collections, and bold challenges, scarce any so good and godly, but might be branded as idolaters, thieves, murderers, adulterers and what not. For who can understand his errors and secret faults? Words are unto things, as clothes unto the body. And as it were a vain course to put upon a child a man's coat, though never so costly, to make him seem a man; so is it not only vain, but also injurious to put upon the things which we dislike, odious phrases, though taken out of the very Scriptures, to make them seem worse than in truth they are.

Indeed, he that is under the law, and judgment thereof, doing the least evil against the first or second commandment, is an idolater, and against the sixth a murderer, and so for the rest in regard of God, and the rigour of justice. Whom yet for men so to call and prosecute, were rash and rude at the least: but now if the person can in respect of other good things, by the Word of God, and utmost extent of charity, be deemed to have any the least interest in the grace of the gospel, to censure such an one as an idolater, thief, murderer, and the like, is

Hosted by Google

against both charity and godliness. The apostle, 2 Cor. vi., teacheth us to judge and speak otherwise, where he calls such of the Christian Corinthians, as by occasion of friends and corruptions of times were drawn to partake in the idol feasts, and tables of devils, of which they had also before been by him most seriously admonished, 1 Cor. 8—10, righteousness, light, Christ, believers, and the temple of God, opposed to unbelievers, unrighteousness, &c. As it is one thing to have sin, which if we say we have not, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us; and another thing, to be sinners in the Scripture phrase, 1 John i. 8, 10; Psa. i. 5; John ix. 3, 29; so all that practise through ignorance or infirmity, some acts, less discernible, of idolatry, are not idolaters: but such in whom it reigneth in action or disposition; lastly, if all in the Church of England, and of Mr. Jacob's church be idolaters as the apostle there speaks, then are they all excluded from the kingdom of God, 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, and are under the curse and condemnation of the law, which censure the most rigid this way have disclaimed as rash and unjust.

2nd. Whether Mr. Jacob's congregation be a true church or no. We have so judged, and the elders of the church at Amsterdam, and the body of the church with them as we conceive; and so do we judge still, having sent you with our letter, a copy of certain papers, in which that matter is handled.

3rd. Whether Mr. Staresmore and his wife are received and retained in our churches by that covenant which they made with God in Mr. Jacob's church, or whether they have renounced it as false and made another?

Answer. Their receiving here was only by that covenant made with God, and the church there continued, and none otherwise. The persons having testimony, and dismission from the church there, and so were in the virtue of the same covenant by us commended and conveyed to that other church in Amsterdam.

4th. To your fourth demand about your carriage towards your teacher, and other brethren renouncing communion with you, it is both unseasonable now to answer, and difficult for us who are ignorant of such circumstances,

Hosted by Google

and manners of carriage by them, as by which, offences are much aggravated or extenuated.

5th. Whether their pretence of having the truth be sufficient to make them the church, and to warrant their above-mentioned dealing?

Answer. Neither the pretence of having, nor the having of the truth indeed makes the church in the sense in hand, no more than the having some other particular commendable virtue by some, makes them the church, excluding them that want it; as Revelation ii., iii. the visible and ministerial church is the whole body and every member thereof. Not some parts, of which, some of these members have more comeliness, and some less. Acts xx. 28; 1 Cor. xiv. 23; Rom. xii.; 1 Cor. xii. The church is a state, spiritual; and political, not personal error thereof or other sin, makes any cease to be a member thereof. And if the greater number be members still, though in error, the smaller cannot be the body: besides, if some particular sin or error make the greatest part not to be members, then much more two or three particulars. Which thereupon, the church might not censure for any error or other sin, to wit, if they were not members. Lastly, this confirms that popish and presumptuous ground, that "the church cannot err."

6th. Whether women have voices with men in the judgments of the churches?

Answer. The apostle teacheth plainly the contrary, 1 Cor. xiv. 34; 1 Tim. ii. 12, 14. And though he speak particularly of prophesying and teaching, yet lays he down a more general rule, forbidding all such speaking, as in which authority is used that is usurped over the man, which is done specially in judgments. And if a woman may not so much as move a question in the church for her instruction, how much less may she give a voice or utter a reproof for censure?

And this answer we return at the length, brethren, to your letter and demands, and therewith our loving salutations in the Lord. In whom, wishing your peace and welfare, we rest, your loving brethren,

JOHN ROBINSZ, and Church with him.

Leyden, 5 *April*, 1624.

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google

AN APPEAL

ON

TRUTH'S BEHALF.

A LETTER,

BY

REV. JOHN ROBINSON,

TO THE

CHURCH AT AMSTERDAM,

PROTESTING AGAINST ITS UNSCRIPTURAL PROCEEDINGS TOWARDS ONE OF ITS MEMBERS.

1624.

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google

AN APPEAL ON TRUTH'S BEHALF.

OUR opposites, after much and long struggling, as wild creatures taken in the snare, perceiving neither friend nor foreigners knew how to yield them any relief (though they crept basely for it), being yet set to hold it out, truth failing them, now they unconscionably invent slanders; hoping, after so long time past, they may now boldly change the causes of our difference, and say, "We were cast out for seducers and for attempting to lead them to idolatry, and so all we have published is no other than lies, which they now threaten to manifest to all the world:" boasting now before all, "they are able to make good their proceedings against us before God and men:" yet, hitherto, all know they have ever shunned to come to trial with us before any, or to take other's advice for common good, as this letter manifests; where also, contrary to their saying, is confirmed that they censured us, for not acknowledging intrapping demands for Christ's government, and a lawful, peaceable meeting, for faction.

The judgment of the Church of Leyden upon the present differences, occasioned by our opposites themselves.*

To our Beloved, the ELDERS *and* CHURCH *at* AMSTERDAM, *grace and peace from God the giver thereof, and in him our salutations.*

We received your letter, brethren, but not answering either our expectation or the weightiness of the business in hand; and are withal rather driven to gather your meaning out of it, than finding the same in it expressed. Only we see plainly your intent of imputing special blame to one, by you accounted the chief adversary, as offering

* *Vide* Prefatory Notice to the foregoing Treatise, pages 339—341.

Hosted by Google

boastingly, as you say, to prove, that he doth worship the God of his fathers, in writing a letter in opposition to the church's agreement, and in rebellious refusing and despising of the same church. First, touching the person intended by you. It should not seem strange to any, if he were most forward, who was deepliest interested in the business; and that, so far as his church-estate and membership must necessarily stand or fall with that covenant impugned by you, as the branch with the root. As Zilpah was not, nor could be, rightfully, Leah's handmaid, except she had been Laban's first, rightfully, Gen. xxix. 24, by whose gift she was transmitted and conveyed unto her; so neither could he be truly a member there with you but by transmission, dismission, or conveyance (call it as you will) from this church to that, and so from that at London first to us here, by virtue of that first covenant there made by profession of faith; which covenant, howsoever by some light person accounted no better than the Turks might make, was by the churches both there and here, also in the time of those worthy governors, now at rest in the Lord, esteemed truly Christian. The party intended by you should, by your grounds, not have been cast out, but left out of the church. And for the things by you imputed unto him, we are certified, by many eye and ear witnesses, that his speech was as followeth: "As Paul, in his case, when he was accused unjustly, said, 'In the way they call heresy, worship I the God of my fathers,' so haply I in this, that which you call and have censured for faction, or a factious action, tending to the breach and division of the church, I judge to be nothing less, but rather a Christian duty, tending to love and not to division in the church in the least, either in action or intention. And if way may be given to speak our minds freely, without interruption, as hath been solemnly granted, it may and will so appear, I doubt not to the hearts," &c. And that this speech he used not till all hope was taken away of any moderate course of proceeding, or of other than by simple confession of the sin of faction. And surely, brethren, it is not credible that he would speak of the worshipping of the God of his fathers, or that any one endued with common sense would offer to prove unto others that he worshipped God by that

Hosted by Google

which he knew they esteemed sinful and evil. If he had proved that he had so worshipped God, what else had it been, but to have proved that he had worshipped God by doing evil, in their conscience, with whom he had to do? This had been an offer fit for him to make, that meant to prove himself guilty, and so to persuade others that he was; but not for him who means, as he did, to avow his innocency in the thing. Brethren, let us be mindful, as we ought, that no relation of a cause, nor plea for or against it, can make either ours the better, or our adversaries the worse, in the eyes of the Supreme Judge both of our persons and judgments, and all other our actions.

And whereas the course, well begun and tending to pacification, was, as we understand, interrupted and broken off, upon a ground taken from the course of not calling again into question, civil judgments once passed by the judge according to right; let it not be grievous unto you if we a little warn you of that dangerous foundation, upon which, it seems, you too much build your manner of proceeding in the church; and to let pass, that it were more for the true peace of the judges of the world with God, though some diminution of their credits in the eyes of vain men, if they not only revised, but often, upon better information or advice, even reversed their former sentences. We pray you call to mind how grievous it was unto the body of you, and dangerous in itself, when some of place amongst you, a few years since, would pattern the government of the church now, by the government of the elders in Israel, which is, in truth, to transform a service into a lordship. More specially for the matter in hand. When the civil judge hath passed sentence, and that execution is done accordingly, and that every one hath his due, there is an end of the matter; but in spiritual judgments there is a further thing which the magistrate meddles not with—the repentance of the censured to follow in time by God's blessing. The end of excommunication is not that the person might be excommunicated, but that repentance might follow; for the furthering whereof many things may and ought to be done in Christian discretion by the church towards the excommunicated, as being, as it were, the church's prisoner, 1 Cor. v. 5, by which he and his sins

Hosted by Google

are bound upon earth, as our Lord teacheth, Matt. xviii. 18. And a larger extent of discretion this way, few cases in an age can persuade to, than this in hand, considering both the ground and carriage of the thing, and the number of the persons opposite, and with these the interest of all other churches in the business. And now understanding, brethren, that competent satisfaction for the manner of the carriage hath been tendered by the parties censured, for the matter to be reduced, as we conceive, to these two heads following, we can do no less, in honour of the truth, discharge of our own consciences before God, and due respect unto them in their distressed state, than to signify and profess,

1. That in a matter of mere counsel and advice, more than which neither the church of London required nor you could afford them, any particular persons advised with and having their reasons of difference from the church's persuasion, may, and, in cases of weight, such as this was, ought by speech or writing as there is occasion, signify that their different judgment and advice to them whom it concerns, provided the same be done in good manner and with due respect to the church. Solomon saith, Prov. xi. 14, that "in the multitude of counsellors there is safety;" and every man's common sense teacheth, that he who propounds a thing to others for counsel, should hear every man's opinion, and the reason thereof for his help and direction. To deny this is to deprive him of liberty that should give counsel, and him of help that should receive it. The church was not in this case to use authority, but to show reason.

2. That, seeing both Moses in the law, Deut. xix. 15, and Christ in the gospel, Matt. xviii. 15—17, ordains that every matter should be established by two or three witnesses, and that, in that order the church should be told or complained to of a brother; for the officer to traduce or complain of a brother to the church, without witness of an offence done, and to proceed with him by questions and interrogatories, tending to his prejudice, and for the church to censure him for refusing to answer such interrogatories so ministered, is both against Moses and Christ, and the law of nature itself, Acts xxiv. 8, 13;

Hosted by Google

and xxv. 5, 16, which taught the wise of the heathen not to proceed in judgment with any but by way of accusation and proof of evil against him. And these persuasions of the things and defence of our own and all other Christians', yea, of all men's lawful liberty, we are willing and able, by the grace of God, to justify against all gainsayers.

And now, brethren, what shall we say more unto you? Our and all other churches' advice you reject, in confidence of your own unerring judgment and proceeding in this matter.

In your letter you mention the great weakness of the church. Oh, that you would indeed manifest such persuasion of yourselves! Then would you not proceed with that confidence in a matter and manner before unheard of in the churches; then would you both be glad of and desire the advice and counsel of others, able and willing, in the fear of the Almighty and in a good conscience, to afford you the best help they can; and not so carry things as if the Word of God either came from you or unto you alone. And for the church here, which is nearliest united unto you, what other use have you had of us, since the death of your wise and modest governors, in all your differences and troubles, save to help to bear part of that scandal and opprobry wherewith, specially in the public carriage of matters, you have laden the ordinances of God and professors of the same in the eyes of all, within and without. But in vain we speak unto you, whose ears prejudice hath stopped. We purpose not henceforth to trouble you any more in this kind; but taking part as occasion in the good things amongst you, and professing ourselves innocent of the things amiss, will bewail your state, which is indeed to be bewailed, and commend it, as we do, to the Lord for bettering. His grace be with you always more and more.

Your loving brethren,

The Pastor and Church at Leyden,

JOHN ROBINSON.

Leyden, September 18, 1624.

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google

AN ANSWER TO A CENSORIOUS EPISTLE.

BY

REV. JOHN ROBINSON.

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google

PREFATORY NOTICE BY THE EDITOR.

Of the authenticity of this Epistle there can be no doubt, though published, it would seem, anonymously. Its history is as follows:—

The Rev. Joseph Hall, B.D., then Rector of Halstead, but afterwards Bishop of Norwich, published a Letter, in 1608, the year of Mr. Robinson's departure to Amsterdam, addressed to "Mr. Smyth and Mr. Rob(inson), Ringleaders of the late Separation at Amsterdam." The Letter bears no date, but must have been written at the time referred to, inasmuch as Hall's Reply to the "Answer" was published in 1610; in the "Dedication" of which Reply, "To our gracious and blessed Mother, the Church of England," he states, "that no less than a year and half is past, Rev. Dear and holy Mother, since I wrote a loving monitory Letter to two of thine unworthy sons, which I heard were fled from thee in person, in affection, and somewhat in opinion; supposing them yet thine, in the main substance, though in circumstances their own."*

That Mr. Robinson was the Author of the "Answer" is placed beyond doubt, from the fact that Mr. Hall states in the "Dedication," that since he wrote the Epistle, "one of them," referring to Mr. Smyth, who had in the meantime become an Anti-pædobaptist, "hath washed off thy font water as unclean; and hath written desperately both

* Hall's Works, vol. ix., page 379, Edited by Rev. Josiah Pratt, B.D., F.A.S., Ed. 1808. London.

Hosted by Google

against thee and his own fellows."* In the "Apology," he addresses Mr. Robinson: "I wrote not to you alone: what is become of your partner, yea, your guide? Woe is me! he hath renounced our Christendom with our church, and hath washed off his former water with new; and now condemns you all for not separating further, no less than we condemn you for separating so far." And in the closing paragraphs of the "Apology," Mr. Hall explicitly alludes to Mr. Robinson by name.†

Mr. Robinson must have received the "Censorious Epistle" shortly after his arrival at Amsterdam, in 1608, and replied to it immediately. Hall's Reply is long and elaborate, and must have occupied considerable time in its composition; but was published in 1610, thus furnishing internal evidence as to the date of Robinson's "Answer" being 1608, before he left Amsterdam for Leyden.

No separately published copy of Mr. Robinson's "Answer" has been found, but is, it is presumed, carefully and accurately reprinted in Hall's Reply to the "Answer," entitled, "A common Apologie of the Church of England, against the unjust challenges of the over-just sect, commonly called Brownists: wherein the grounds and defences of the Separation are largely discussed; occasioned by a late Pamphlet, published under the name of 'An Answer to a Censorious Epistle,' which the reader shall finde in the margent." By J. H. 4to., London, 1610.

As the title-page indicates, the "Answer" is copied into the "Apologie," and forms the text-book of the Author's criticisms and animadversions.

As Mr. Robinson follows the order of the "Censorious Epistle," and adapts his replies to the paragraphs successively, without quoting them verbatim, the Letter itself is reprinted before the "Answer," that the subjects

* Character of the Beast, by John Smyth.

† Hall's Works, vol. ix. page 384.

Hosted by Google

in dispute may be the better understood by the reader; and that the differences of opinion between Mr. Hall and Mr. Robinson, respecting the spirit and language of the "Censorious Epistle" may be seen, a few lines are transcribed from Mr. Hall's "Apologie." Mr. Robinson's opinion will be learned from his "Answer," which his clerical antagonist calls "a stomachful pamphlet":—

"There was no gall in my pen, no insultation: I wrote to you as brethren, and wished you companions. There was more danger of flattery in my style, than bitterness. My opposition was not too vehement, but too slight and slender: so, strong champions blame their adversary for striking too early. You might have forborne this fault; it was my favour, that I did not my worst: you are worthy of more weight, that complain of ease.

"The discourse that I rolled down upon you was weak and weightless: you shall well find this was my lenity, not my impotence. The fault hereof is partly in your expectation, not in my letter. I meant but a short epistle; you looked belike for a volume or nothing.

"I meant only a general monition; you looked for a solid prosecution of particulars. It is not for you to give tasks to others' pens. By what law must we write nothing but large scholastical discourses, such tomes as yours? May we not touch your sore, unless we will lance and search it? I was not enough your enemy; forgive me this error, and you shall smart more."*

Mr. Robinson did not reply to Mr. Hall's "Common Apology," judging it a needless task; and characterizing it as being "stuffed with popish principles," and "as being as much and more immediately against the Reformists and their cause, in the main, as against us and ours."†

* Hall's Works, vol. ix. page 383.

† *Vide* vol. iii. Plea for Prophecy, Preface, page 286.

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google

LETTER BY REV. JOSEPH HALL, B.D., RECTOR OF HALSTEAD, CALLED BY MR. ROBINSON "A CENSORIOUS EPISTLE."

TO MR. SMYTH AND MR. ROB(INSON,) RINGLEADERS OF THE LATE SEPARATION AT AMSTERDAM.

Setting forth their injury done to the Church, the Injustice of their Cause, and Fearfulness of their Offence. Censuring and advising them.

We hear of your separation, and mourn; yet not so much for you, as for your wrong.

You could not do a greater injury to your mother, than to flee from her. Say, she were poor, ragged, weak; say, she were deformed; yet she is not infectious; or, if she were, yet she is yours.

This were cause enough for you, to lament her, to pray for her, to labour for her redress; not to avoid her. This unnaturalness is shameful; and more heinous in you, who are reported not parties in this evil, but authors. Your flight is not so much, as your misguidance.

Plead not: this fault is past excuse: if we all should follow you, this were the way of a church, as you plead, imperfect, to make no church; and of a remedy, to make a disease. Still the fruit of our charity to you, is besides our grief, pity. Your zeal of truth hath misled you, and you, others; a zeal, if honest, yet blindfolded, and led by self-will. Oh, that you loved peace, but half so well as truth, then, this breach had never been; and you that are yet brethren, had been still companions.

"Go out of Babylon," you say: "the voice, not of

Hosted by Google

schism, but of holiness." Know you where you are? Look about you, I beseech you; look behind you; and see if we have not left it upon our backs. She herself feels, and sees, that she is abandoned: and complains to all the world that we have not only forsaken, but spoiled her; and yet you say, "Come out of Babylon." And except you will be willingly blind, you may see the heaps of her altars, the ashes of her idols, the ruins of her monuments, the condemnation of her errors, the revenge of her abominations.

And are we yet in Babylon? Is Babylon yet amongst us? Where are the main buildings of that accursed city? those high and proud towers of their universal hierarchy, infallible judgment, dispensation with laws of God, and sins of men; disposition of kingdoms; deposition of princes; parting stakes with God in our conversion, through freedom of will; in our salvation, through the merit of our works? Where are those rotten heaps (rotten, not through age, but corruption) of transubstantiating of bread, adoring of images, multitude of sacraments, power of indulgences, necessity of confessions, profit of pilgrimages, constrained and approved ignorance, unknown devotions? Where are those deep vaults, if not mines, of penances and purgatories, whatsoever hath been devised by those popelings, whether profitable or glorious, against the Lord and his Christ? Are they not all rased and buried in the dust? Hath not the majesty of her gods, like as was done to Mythra and Serapis, been long ago offered to the public laughter of the vulgar? What is this, but to go, yea, to run, if not to fly, out of Babylon?

But as every man is a hearty patron of his own actions, and it is a desperate cause that hath no plea, you allege our consorting in ceremonies, and say, still we tarry in the suburbs. Grant that these were as ill as an enemy can make them, or can pretend them: you are deceived, if you think the walls of Babylon stand upon ceremonies. Substantial errors are both her foundation and frame. These ritual observances are not so much as tile and reed; rather like to some fane upon the roof, for ornament, more than use; not parts of the building, but not necessary appendances. If you take them otherwise, you wrong the

Hosted by Google

church: if thus, and yet depart, you wrong it and yourself: as if you would have persuaded righteous Lot not to stay in Zoar, because it was so near Sodom. I fear, if you had seen the money-changers in the temple, however you would have prayed, or taught there: Christ did it, not forsaking the place, but scourging the offenders. And this is the valour of Christian teachers to oppose abuses, not to run away from them. Where shall you not thus find Babylon? Would you have run from Geneva because of her wafers? or from Corinth, for her disordered love-feasts?

Either run out of the world, or your flight is in vain. If experience of change teach you not that you shall find your Babylon everywhere, return not. Compare the place you have left with that you have chosen; let not fear of seeming to repent over-soon make you partial. Lo! there a common harbour of all opinions, of all heresies, if not a mixture: here, you drew in the free, and clear air of the gospel, without that odious composition of Judaism, Arianism, Anabaptism: there, you live in the stench of these, and more. You are unworthy of pity, if you will approve your misery. Say, if you can, that the Church of England (if she were not yours) is not a heaven to Amsterdam. How is it, then, that our gnats are harder to swallow than their camels? and that, while all Christendom magnifies our happiness, and applauds it, your handful alone so detests our enormities that you despise our graces?

See whether in this you make not God a loser. The thank of all his favours is lost, because you want more: and, in the meantime, who gains by this sequestration, but Rome and hell? How do they insult in this advantage, that our mother's own children condemn her for unclean, that we are daily weakened by our divisions, that the rude multitude hath so palpable a motive to distrust us. Sure, you intended it not: but if you had been their hired agent, you could not have done our enemies greater service.

The God of heaven open your eyes, that you may see the injustice of that zeal which hath transported you; and turn your heart to an endeavour of all Christian satisfaction: otherwise, your souls shall find too late, that it had been a thousand times better to swallow a ceremony, than

Hosted by Google

to rend a church; yea, that even whoredoms and murders shall abide an easier answer than separation.

I have done, if only I have advised you of that fearful threatening of the wise man: "The eye that mocketh his father, and despiseth the government of his mother, the ravens of the river shall pick it out, and the young eagles eat it." Prov. xxx. 17.

Hosted by Google

AN ANSWER TO "A CENSORIOUS EPISTLE."

"It is a hard thing even for sober-minded men, in cases of controversy, to use, soberly, the advantages of the times; upon which, whilst men are mounted on high, they use to behold such as they oppose too overly, and not without contempt; and so are ofttimes emboldened to roll upon them, as from aloft, very weak and weightless discourses: thinking any slight and slender opposition sufficient to oppress those underlings whom they have, as they suppose, at so great an advantage. Upon this very presumption, it cometh to pass, that this Author undertaketh thus solemnly and severely to censure a cause whereof, as appeareth in the sequel of the discourse, he is utterly ignorant: which, had he been but half so careful to have understood as he hath been forward to censure, he would either have been, I doubt not, more equal towards it, or more weighty against it. As this Epistle is come to my hands, so I wish the Answer of it may come to the hands of him that occasioned it. Entreating the Christian reader, in the name of the Lord, unpartially to behold, without either prejudice of cause or respect of person, what is written on both sides; and so from the court of a sound conscience, to give just judgment.

"The 'crime' here objected, is 'separation;' a thing very odious in the eyes of all them from whom it is made; as evermore casting upon them the imputation of evil, whereof all men are impatient. And hence it cometh to pass that the Church of England can better brook the vilest persons continuing communion with it, than any whomsoever separating from it, though upon never so just

Hosted by Google

and well-grounded reasons. And yet separation from the world, and so from the men of the world, and so from the prince of the world that reigneth in them, and so from whatsoever is contrary to God, is the first step to our communion with God, and angels, and good men, as the first step to a ladder is to leave the earth!

"The separation we have made, in respect of our knowledge and obedience, is indeed late and new; yet is it, in the nature and causes thereof, as ancient as the gospel, which was first founded in the 'enmity,' Gen. iii. 15, which God himself put betwixt the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent; which 'enmity' hath not only been successively continued, but also visibly manifested by the actual separation of all true churches from the world, in their collection and constitution, before the law, under the law, and under the gospel. Gen. iv. 13, 14, 16; vi. 1, 2; vii. 1, with 1 Pet. i. 22; iii. 20, 21; Gen. xii. 2; Lev. xx. 24, 26; Neh. ix. 2; John xvii. 14, 16; Acts ii. 40; xix. 9; 1 Cor. vi. 17. Which separation the Church of England neither hath made nor doth make, but stands actually one with all that part of the world within the kingdom, without separation: for which cause, amongst others, we have chosen, by the grace of God, rather to separate ourselves to the Lord from it, than with it from him, in the visible constitution of it.

"To the title of a 'Ringleader,' wherewith it pleaseth this 'pistler to style me, I answer, That if the thing I have be good, it is good and commendable to have been forward in it; if it be evil, let it be reproved by the light of God's Word; and that God, to whom I have done that I have done, will, I doubt not, give me both to see and to heal my error, by speedy repentance: if I have fled away on foot, I shall return on horseback. But as I durst never set foot into this way, but upon a most sound and unresistable conviction of conscience by the Word of God, as I was persuaded, so must my retiring be wrought by more solid reasons, from the same Word, than are to be found in a thousand such pretty pamphlets and formal flourishes as this is.

"Your pitying of us, and sorrowing for us, especially for the wrong done by us, were, in you, commendable affec-

Hosted by Google

tions, if by us justly occasioned; but if your church be deeply drenched in apostacy, and you cry 'Peace, peace,' when sudden and certain desolation is at hand, it is you that do wrong, though you make the complaint. And so, being cruel towards yourselves, and your own, whom you flatter, you cannot be truly pitiful towards others whom you bewail. But I will not discourage you in this affection, lest we find few in the same fault: the most, instead of 'pity' and compassion, affording nothing but fury and indignation.

"The first action laid against us is of 'unnaturalness,' and ingratitude, towards our 'mother, the Church of England, for our causeless separation from her.' To which unjust accusation, and trivial querimony, our most just defence hath been, and is, That to our knowledge, we have done her no wrong. We do freely, and with all thankfulness, acknowledge every good thing she hath, and which ourselves have there received. The superabundant grace of God covering and passing by the manifold enormities in that church, wherewith these good things are inseparably commingled; and wherein we also, through ignorance and infirmity, were inwrapped. But what then? Should we still have continued in sin, that grace might have abounded? If God have caused a further truth, like a light in a dark place, to shine in our hearts, should we still have mingled that light with darkness, contrary to the Lord's own practice, Gen. i. 4, and express precept, 2 Cor. vi. 14?

"But, the Church of England, say you, is our 'mother,' and so ought not to be avoided. But, say I, we must not so cleave to 'Holy Mother' Church as [that] we neglect our heavenly Father and his commandments: which, we know, in that estate, we could not but transgress; and that heinously, and against our consciences; not only in the want of many Christian ordinances, to which we were most straitly bound, both by God's Word and our own necessities; but also in our most sinful subjection to many antichristian enormities, which we are bound to eschew as hell. She is our 'mother;' so may she be, and yet not the Lord's wife! Every mother of children is not a wife. 'Ammi and Ruhamah' were bidden to 'plead' with their 'mother,'

Hosted by Google

apostate Israel; and 'plead' that she was 'not' the Lord's 'wife,' nor he her 'husband.' Hos. ii. 1, 2. And though you forbid us a thousand times, yet must we 'plead.' Not to 'excuse' our 'fault,' but to justify our innocency: and that not only, nor so much, in respect of ourselves, as of the truth which, without sacrilege, we may not suffer to be condemned unheard. And if you yet hear her not, rather blame yourselves as deaf than as dumb. Is not 'Babylon' the mother of God's 'people;' whom he, therefore, commandeth to 'depart out of her,' lest, being 'partakers of her sins,' they also partake of her 'plagues?' Rev. xviii. 4. And, to conclude, What say you more against us, for your 'mother,' the Church of England, than the Papists do for their mother, and your mother's mother, the Church of Rome, against you, whom they condemn as unnatural bastards, and impious matricides, in your separations from her? And were not Luther, Zuinglius, Cranmer, Latimer, and the rest, begot to the Lord in the womb of the Romish Church? Did they not receive the knowledge of his truth when they stood actual members of it? Whom, notwithstanding, afterwards, they forsook, and that justly, for her fornications! But here, in the name of the Church of England, you wash your hands of all Babylonish abominations, which you pretend you have forsaken, and her, for and with them. And, in this regard, you, [we] speak thus, 'The reformation you have made of the many and main corruptions of the Romish Church we do ingenuously acknowledge, and do, withal, embrace with you, all the truths which, to our knowledge, you have received instead of them; but Rome was not built all in a day.'

"The 'mystery of iniquity' did advance itself by degrees; and as the rise was, so must the fall be. That 'man of sin,' and lawless man, must languish and die away of a consumption. 2 Thess. ii. 3, 7, 8. And what though many of the highest towers of Babel, and of the strongest pillars also, be demolished and pulled down; yet may the building stand still, though tottering to and fro, as it doth, and only underpropped and upheld with the shoulder and arm of flesh; without which, in a very moment, it would fall flat upon and be level with the earth. You have renounced many false doctrines in Popery, and, in their places, embraced the truth.

Hosted by Google

But what, if this truth be taught under the same hateful prelacy, in the same devised office of ministry, and confused communion of the profane multitude, and that mingled with many grievous errors? Shall some general truths, yea, though few of them, in the particulars, may be soundly practised, sweeten and sanctify the other errors? Doth not one heresy make a heretic? And doth not a 'little leaven,' whether in doctrine or manners, 'leaven the whole lump?' 1 Cor. v. 6; Gal. v. 9; Hag. ii. 13. If Antichrist held not many truths, wherewith should he countenance so many forgeries? Or, how could his work be a 'mystery of iniquity,' which, in Rome, is more gross and palpable, but in England is spun with a finer thread, and so more hardly discovered? But to wade no further in universalities, we will take a little time to examine such particulars as you yourself have picked out for your most advantage, to see whether you be so clear of Babel's towers in your own evidence, as you bear the world in hand.

"'Where,' say you, 'are those proud towers of their universal hierarchy?' One in Lambeth; another in Fulham; and wheresoever a pontifical prelate is, or his chancellor, commissary, or other subordinate, there is a tower of Babel unruinated! To this end I desire to know of you, whether the office of archbishops, bishops, and the rest of that rank, were not parts of that accursed hierarchy, in Queen Mary's days, and members of that 'man of sin'? If they were, then as shoulders and arms under that head, the Pope, and over the inferior members, and have now the same ecclesiastical jurisdiction derived and continued upon them, whereof they were possessed in the time of Popery, as it is plain they have, by the first parliament of Queen Elizabeth, why are they not still members of that body, though the head, the Pope, be cut off? And so do all the reformed churches in the world, of whose testimony you boast so loud, renounce the prelacy of England, as part of that pseudo-clergy and antichristian hierarchy derived from Rome."

"Infallible judgment." "It seems the Sacred, so called, Synod, assumeth little less unto herself in her determinations. Otherwise, how durst she decree so absolutely, as

Hosted by Google

she doth, touching things reputed 'indifferent;' namely, 'That all men, in all places, must submit unto them, without exception or limitation'? Except she could infallibly determine that these her ceremonies, thus absolutely imposed, should edify all men at all times, how durst she thus impose them? To exact obedience in and unto them, whether they offend or offend not, whether they edify or destroy, were intolerable presumption."

"Dispensation with laws of God and sins of men." "To let pass your ecclesiastical consistories, wherein sins and absolutions from them are as venal and saleable as at Rome,—is it not a law of the Eternal God, that the ministers of the gospel, the bishops or elders, should be 'apt' and 'able' to 'teach'? 1 Tim. iii. 2; Tit. i. 9. And, is it not their grievous sin to be unapt hereunto? Isa. lvi. 10, 11. And yet, who knoweth not that the patrons amongst you present, that the bishops institute, the archdeacons induct, the churches receive; and the laws, both civil and ecclesiastical, allow and justify ministers unapt and unable to 'teach'?

"Is it not a law of the Eternal God, that the 'elders' should 'feed the flock,' over which they are set, labouring amongst them in the Word and doctrine? Acts xx. 28; 1 Pet. v. 1, 2. And is it not sin to omit this duty?

"Plead not for Baal. Your dispensations for non-residency and pluralities for benefices, as for two, three, or more; yea, *tot. quot.*, as many as a man will have, or can get, are so many dispensations of the laws of God and sins of men. These things are too impious to be defended, and too manifest to be denied."

"Disposition of kingdoms, and deposition of princes." "You are wiser, and I hope honester than thus to attempt, though that received maxim amongst you, 'No ceremony, no bishop, no bishop, no king,' savours too strongly of that weed. But what though you be loyal to earthly kings, and their crowns and kingdoms, yet if you be traitors and rebels against the king of his church, Jesus Christ, and the sceptre of his kingdom, not suffering him, by his laws and officers, to reign over you; but, instead of them, do stoop to Antichrist in his offices and ordinances; shall your loyalty towards men excuse your treasons against the

Hosted by Google

Lord? Though you now cry never so loud, 'We have no king but Cæsar,' John xix. 15, yet is there 'another king, one Jesus,' Acts xvii. 7, which shall return and pass a heavy doom upon the rebellious: 'These mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring them, and slay them before me.' Luke xxix. 29."

"Parting stakes with God in our conversion." "Not to speak of the error of universal grace, and consequently of free-will, that groweth on apace amongst you; what do you else but put in for a part with God in conversion, though not through freedom of will, yet in a devised ministry, the means of conversion. It being the Lord's peculiar, as well to appoint the outward ministry of conversion, as to give the inward grace. 1 Cor. iii. 9.

"'Where,' say you, 'are those rotten heaps of transubstantiating of bread?' And where, say I, learned you your devout kneeling to or before the bread, but, from that error of transubstantiation? Yea, what less can it insinuate than either that or some other the like idolatrous conceit? If there were not something more in the bread and wine than in the water at baptism, or in the Word read or preached, why should such solemn kneeling be so severely pressed at that time, rather than upon the other occasions? And well and truly have your own men affirmed, that it were far less sin and appearance of an idolatry that is nothing so gross, to tie men, in their prayers, to kneel before a crucifix, than before the bread and wine: and the reason followeth, for that Papists commit an idolatry far more gross and odious in worshipping the bread, than in worshipping any other of their images or idols whatsoever."*

"Adoring of images." "To let pass your devout kneeling unto your ordinary, when you take the oath of canonical obedience, or receive absolution at his hands, which, as the main actions are religious, must needs be religious adoration! what is the adoring of your truly human, though called 'Divine,' service-book, in and by which you worship God, as the Papists do by their images? If the Lord Jesus, in his testament, have not commanded any such book, it is accursed and abominable. If you think he have, show us the place where, that we may know it with you: or manifest unto

* Apology of the Min. of Lincoln Dioc. part 1, page 66.

Hosted by Google

us, that ever the apostles used themselves, or commended to the churches after them, any such service-book! Was not the Lord, in the apostles' time, and apostolic churches', purely and perfectly worshipped, when the officers of the church, in their ministration, manifested the spirit of prayer which they had received according to the present necessities and occasions of the church; before the least parcel of this patchery came into the world? And might not the Lord now be also purely and perfectly worshipped, though this printed image, with the painted and carved images, were sent back to Rome; yea, or cast to hell, from whence both they and it came? Speak, in yourself, might not the Lord be entirely worshipped with pure and holy worship, though none other book but the Holy Scriptures were brought into the church: if yea, as who can deny it, that knows what the worship of God meaneth, what, then, doth your service-book there? The Word of God is perfect, and admitteth of none addition. Cursed be he that addeth to the Word of the Lord; and cursed be that which is added; and so be your great idol, the communion-book, though, like Nebuchadnezzar's image, some part of the matter be gold and silver, which is also so much the more detestable by how much it is the more highly advanced amongst you."

"Multitude of sacraments." "The number of sacraments seems greater amongst you, by one at the least, than Christ hath left in his testament; and that is marriage, which, howsoever, you do not, in express terms, call a sacrament, no more did Christ and the apostles call baptism and the supper 'sacraments,' yet do you, in truth, create it a sacrament, in the administration and use of it. There are the parties to be married, and their marriage, representing 'Christ and his church,' and their 'spiritual' union; to which 'mystery,' saith the oracle of your service-book expressly, God hath 'consecrated' them. There is the ring, hallowed by the said service-book, whereon it must be laid, for the element; there are the words of consecration, 'In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;' there is the place, the church; the time, usually the Lord's-day; the minister, the parish priest. And being made, as it is, a part of God's worship, and of the minister's office, what

Hosted by Google

is it, if it be not a sacrament? It is no part of prayer, or preaching; and with the sacrament it hath the greatest consimilitude; but an idol I am sure it is, in the celebration of it, being made a ministerial duty, and part of God's worship, without warrant, call it by what name you will."

"Power of indulgences." "Your court of faculties, from whence your dispensations and tolerations for non-residency, and plurality of benefices, are had; together with your commuting of penances, and absolving one man from another: take away this power from the prelates, and you maim the 'beast' in a limb."

"Necessity of confession." "In your high commission court, very absolute, where, by the oath *ex officio*, men are constrained to accuse themselves of such things as whereof no man will or can accuse them; what necessity is laid upon men in this case, let your prisons witness."

"Profit of pilgrimages." "Though you have lost the shrines of saints, yet you retain their days, and those holy as the Lord's-day; and that with good profit to your spiritual carnal courts, from such as profane them with the least and most lawful labour, notwithstanding the liberty of the six days' labour which the Lord hath given. And as much would the masters of these courts be stirred at the casting of these saints' days out of the calendar, as were the 'masters' of the possessed maid, when 'the spirit of divination' was cast out of her. Acts xvi. 19."

"Constrained and approved ignorance." "If an ignorant and unpreaching ministry be approved amongst you, and the people constrained, by all kinds of violence, to submit unto it, and therewith to rest, as what is more usual throughout the kingdom, then let no modest man once open his mouth to deny that 'ignorance' is 'constrained and approved' amongst you."

"Unknown devotions." "If the service, said or sung, in the parish church, may be called 'devotion,' then sure there is good store of unknown devotion; the greatest part, in most parishes, neither knowing nor regarding what is said, nor wherefore."

"Penances and purgatories." "What are your sheet penances for adultery, and all your purse penances for

Hosted by Google

all other sins? Than which, though some worse in popery, yet none more common.

"Touching 'purgatory,' though you deny the doctrine of it, and teach the contrary, yet how well your practice suits with it, let it be considered in these particulars: Your absolving of men dying excommunicate, after they be dead, and before they may have Christian burial: your Christian burial in holy ground, if the party will be at the charges: your ringing of hallowed bells for the soul: your singing the corpse to the grave from the church stile your praying over, or for the dead; especially in these words, 'That God would hasten his kingdom, that we with this our brother,' though his life were never so wretched and death desperate, 'and all other departed in the true faith of thy holy name, may have our perfect consummation both in body and soul.' Your general doctrines, and your particular practices, agree in this, as in the most other things, like 'harp and harrow!' In word, you profess many truths, which in deed you deny. These and many more popish devices, by others at large, discovered to the world, both for pomp and profit, are not only rased, and buried in the dust, but are advanced amongst you, above all that is called God.

"You are far from doing to the Romish idols as was done to the Egyptian idols 'Mythra and Serapis,' whose priests were expelled their ministry, and monuments exposed to utter scorn and desolation; their temples demolished and rased to the very foundation.

"But your temples, especially your cathedrals and mother churches, stand, still, in their proud majesty, possessed by archbishops and lord bishops, like the flamens and archflamens amongst the Gentiles, from whom they were derived, and furnished with all manner of pompous and superstitious monuments; as carved and painted images, massing copes and surplices; chanting and organ music, and many other glorious ornaments of the Romish harlot, by which her majesty is commended to and admired by the vulgar; so far are you in these respects, from being gone, or fled, yea, or crept either, out of Babylon! Now, if you be thus Babylonish where you repute yourselves most Sion-like, and thus confounded in your own

Hosted by Google

evidence; what defence could you make in the things whereof an adversary would challenge you? If your light be darkness, how great is your darkness!"

"Consorting in ceremonies." "But for that, not the separation but the cause, makes the schismatic: and lest you should seem to speak evil of the thing you know not, and to condemn a cause unheard, you lay down, in the next place, the supposed cause of our separation, against which you deal as insufficiently; and that you pretend to be, none other than your 'consorting' with the Papists in certain 'ceremonies;' touching which, and our separation in regard of them, thus you write:—'M. H.: If you have taken but the least knowledge of the grounds of our judgment and practice, how dare you thus abuse both us and the reader, as if the only or chief ground of our separation were your popish ceremonies? But if you go only by guess, having never so much as read over one treatise published in our defence, and yet stick not to pass this your censorious doom, both upon us and it, I leave it to the reader to judge whether you have been more lavish of your censure or credit! Most unjust is the censure of a cause unknown; though in itself never so blameworthy; which, nevertheless, may be praiseworthy for aught he knows that censures it.'

"And touching the 'ceremonies' here spoken of, howsoever we have formerly refused them, submitting, as all others did and do, to the prelate's spiritual jurisdiction—herein, through ignorance, straining at 'gnats,' and swallowing 'camels,' yet are we verily persuaded of them, and so were before we separated, That they are but as leaves of that tree, and as badges of that 'man of sin,' whereof the Pope is head, and the prelates, shoulders! And so we, for our parts, see no reason why any of the bishops' sworn servants, as all the ministers of the Church of England are canonically, should make nice to wear their lords' liveries. Which 'ceremonies,' notwithstanding, we know well enough, howsoever you, for advantage, extenuate and debase them unto us, to be advanced and preferred, in your church, before the preaching of the gospel. It is much that they, being 'not so much as reed,' nor any part of the building, as you pretend,

Hosted by Google

should overturn the best builders amongst you as they do. The proportion betwixt 'Zoar' and them holds well: Zoar was a neighbour unto Sodom, both in place and sin, and obnoxious to the same destruction with it; and it was Lot's error to desire to have it spared, Gen. xix. 15, 18—20; and so he never found rest nor peace in it, but forsook it for fear of the same just judgment, which had overtaken the rest of the cities, ver. 30. The application of this to your 'ceremonies,' I leave to yourself; and them, to that destruction to which they are devoted by the Lord.

"How we would have behaved ourselves 'in the temple,' where the 'money-changers' were, and they that 'sold doves,' we shall answer you when you prove your church to be the 'Temple of God,' compiled and built of spiritually 'hewn' and 'lively stones,' 1 Kings v. 17, 18; vi. 7; 1 Pet. ii. 5; and of the 'cedars, firs,' and 'thyme,' trees of Lebanon, 2 Chron. ii. 8, framed and set together in that comely order which 'a greater than Solomon' hath prescribed; unto which God hath promised his presence. But whilst we take it to be, as it is, a confused heap of dead, and defiled, and polluted stones, and of all rubbish of briers and brambles of the wilderness, for the most part fitter for burning than building; we take ourselves rather bound to show our obedience in departing from it, than our valour in purging it; and to follow the prophet's counsel in flying out of Babylon, 'as the he-goats before the flock.' Jer. l. 8.

"And what, I pray you, is the valour which the best hearted and most zealous Reformers amongst you, have manifested in driving out 'the money-changers'? Doth it not appear in this, that they suffer themselves to be driven out with the two-stringed whip of ceremonies and subscription, by 'the money-changers' the chancellors and officials which sell sins like 'doves;' and by the chief-priests, the bishops, which set them on work? So far are the most zealous amongst you, from driving out the 'money-changers,' as [that] they themselves are driven out by them; because they will not change with them to the utmost farthing!

"For the 'wafers,' in Geneva; and disorders, in Corinth; they were corruptions which may and do, or the like unto

Hosted by Google

them, creep into the purest churches in the world: for the reformation whereof Christ hath given his power unto his church, that such evils as are brought in by human frailty may, by divine authority, be purged out. This power and presence of Christ you want; holding all by homage, or rather by villanage, under the prelates; unto whose sinful yoke you stoop, in more than Babylonish bondage, bearing and approving, by personal communion, infinite abominations. And in these last two respects principally; your Babylonish confusion of all sorts of people in the body of your church, without separation, and your Babylonish bondage under your spiritual lords, the prelates; we account you Babylon, and fly from you.

"Master H., having formerly expostulated with us on our supposed impiety, in forsaking a 'ceremonious' Babylon in England, proceeds, in the next place, to lay down our madness, in choosing a 'substantial' Babylon in 'Amsterdam.' And if it be so found, by due trial, as he suggesteth, it is hard to say, whether our impiety or madness be the greater! Belike Master H. thinks we gather churches here, by town-rows, as they do in England; and that all within the parish procession are of the same church. Wherefore else, tells he us of Jews, Arians, and Anabaptists; with whom we have nothing common but the streets and market-place? It is the condition of the church, to live in the world, and to have civil society with the men of this world. 1 Cor. v. 10; John xvii. 11. But what is this, to that spiritual communion of the saints in the fellowship of the gospel, wherein they are separated, and sanctified, from the world unto the Lord? John xvii. 16; 1 Cor. i. 2; 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18.

"We, indeed, have much wickedness in the city where we live; you, in the church: but, in earnest, do you imagine we account the kingdom of England 'Babylon,' or the city of Amsterdam, 'Sion?' It is the Church of England, or State-Ecclesiastical, which we account Babylon; and from which we withdraw in spiritual communion. But for the commonwealth and kingdom, as we honour it above all the states in the world, so would we thankfully embrace the meanest corner in it, at the extremest conditions of any people in the kingdom. The hellish impieties in the city

Hosted by Google

of 'Amsterdam' do no more prejudice our heavenly communion in the church of Christ, than the frogs, lice, flies, murrain, and other plagues overspreading Egypt, did the Israelites, when Goshen, the portion of their inheritance, was free, Exod. viii. 22; ix. 26; nor than the deluge, wherewith the whole world was covered, did Noah, when he and his family were safe in the ark, Gen. vii.; nor than 'Satan's throne' did the church of Pergamos, being established in the same city with it. Rev. ii. 12, 13.

"It is the will of God and of Christ, that his church should abide in the world, and converse with it in the affairs thereof, which are common to both. But it is the apostacy of Antichrist to have communion with the world in the holy things of God, which are the peculiars of the church, and cannot, without great sacrilege, be so prostituted and profaned.

"The air of the gospel which you draw in, is nothing so free and clear as you make show. It is only because you are used to it, that makes you so judge. The thick smoke of your *Canons*, especially of such as are planted against the kingdom of Christ, the visible church and the administration of it, do both obscure and poison the air which you all draw in, and wherein you breathe. The plaguy spiritual leprosy of sin rising up in the foreheads of so many thousands in the church, unshut up, uncovered, infects all, both persons and things, amongst you. Lev. xiii. 45—47; 2 Cor. vi. 17. The blasting hierarchy suffers no good thing to grow or prosper, but withers all, both bud and branch. The daily sacrifice of the service-book, which, instead of spiritual prayer sweet as incense, you offer up, morning and evening, smells so strong of the Pope's, portuise* as it makes many hundreds, amongst yourselves, stop their noses at it; and yet you boast of 'the free and clear air of the gospel' wherein you breathe!

"That 'all Christendom should so magnify' your 'happiness,' as you say, is much; and yet yourselves, and the best amongst you, complain so much, both in word and writing, of your miserable condition under the imperious and superstitious impositions of the prelates; yea, and

* Breviary or Mass-book.

Hosted by Google

suffer so much also, under them, as at this day you do, for seeking the same church government and ministry which is in use in all other churches, save your own! The truth is, you are best liked where you are worst known. Your next neighbours of Scotland know your bishops' government so well as they rather choose to undergo all the miseries of bonds and banishment, than to partake with you in your 'happiness' this way: so highly do they 'magnify' and 'applaud' the same! Which choice, I doubt not, other churches also, would make, if the same necessity were laid upon them. And for your 'graces,' we 'despise' them not, nor any good thing amongst you; no more than you do such graces and good things as are to be found in the Church of Rome, from which you separate notwithstanding. We have, by God's mercy, the pure and right use of the good gifts and graces of God in Christ's ordinance, which you want. Neither the Lord's people, nor the holy vessels, could make Babylon, Sion; though both the one and the other were captived for a time.

"Where the truth is a gainer, the Lord, which is TRUTH, cannot be 'a loser.' Neither are 'the thanks' of ancient 'favours lost,' amongst them which still press on towards new mercies. Unthankful are they unto the blessed majesty of God, and unfaithful also, which, knowing the will of their Master, do it not, but go on presumptuously, in disobedience to many, the holy ordinances of the Lord and of his Christ, which they know, and in word also acknowledge, he hath given to his church to be observed; and not for idle speculation and disputation, without obedience. It is not by our 'sequestration,' but by your confusion, that 'Rome and Hell gains.' Your odious commixture of all sorts of people in the body of your church, in whose lap the vilest miscreants are dandled; sucking her breasts, as her natural children, and are be-blest by her, as having right thereunto, with all her holy things, as prayer, sacraments, and other ceremonies; is that which advantageth 'Hell,' in the final obduration and perdition of the wicked, whom, by these means, you flatter and deceive. The Romish prelacy and priesthood amongst you, with the appurtenances for their maintenance and ministrations, are Rome's advantage: which,

Hosted by Google

therefore, she challengeth as her own; and by which, she also still holds possession amongst you, under the hope of regaining her full inheritance, at one time or other. And if the Papists take 'advantage' at our condemnation of you, and separation from you, it concerns you well to see where the blame is, and there to lay it; lest, through light and inconsiderate judgment, you justify the wicked, and condemn the righteous. And for the suspicion of the 'rude multitude,' you need not much fear it. They will suspect nothing that comes under the king's broad seal; they are ignorant of this fault. Though it were the mass that came with authority of the magistrate, they, for the most part, would be without suspicion of it; so ignorant and profane are they in the most places. It is the wise-hearted amongst you, that suspect your dealings, who will also suspect you yet more, as your unsound dealings shall be further discovered.

"Lastly: The terrible threat you utter against us, 'That even whoredoms and murders shall abide an easier answer than Separation,' would certainly fall heavy upon us, if this answer were to be made in your Consistory Courts, or before any of your Ecclesiastical Judges; but because we know that not Antichrist, but Christ, shall be our Judge, we are bold upon the warrant of his Word and Testament, which, being sealed with his blood, may not be altered, to proclaim to all the world, separation from whatsoever riseth up rebelliously against the sceptre of his kingdom; as we are undoubtedly persuaded the communion, government, ministry, and worship of the Church of England do!"

Hosted by Google

A CATECHISM

BY THE

REV. JOHN ROBINSON;

LEYDEN.

BEING

AN APPENDIX TO THE FOUNDATION OF CHRISTIAN RELIGION, GATHERED INTO

SIX PRINCIPLES.

BY

REV. WILLIAM PERKINS.

1642.

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google

NOTICE BY THE EDITOR.

No trace of this Catechism has been found earlier than 1642—seventeen years after the death of its Author. It does not appear, however, to have been a posthumous publication. The edition of 1655, the title of which is given in the next page, contains a preface, omitted in earlier copies, written unquestionably by Mr. Robinson, and must have been taken from an edition published during the Author's lifetime, and at Leyden itself, as he evidently intended it for the use of the adult portion of his church and congregation.

The sentiments taught in this Catechism are identically those taught by Mr. Robinson throughout his works, and furnish the most conclusive, internal evidence, that the work is both genuine and authentic.

Hosted by Google

TITLES

TO

THREE DIFFERENT EDITIONS.

I.

An Appendix to Mr. Perkins' Six Principles of the Christian Religion. By JOHN ROBINSON. 1642.

II.

A Briefe Catechism concerning Church Government, by that Revered Divine, Mr. JOHN ROBINSON, and may be fitly adjoyned to Mr. Perkins' Six Principles, as appendix thereto. 1 Timothy iii. 14, 15. London: printed in the year 1642.

III.

An Appendix to Mr. Perkins, his Six Principles of the Christian Religion; touching the more solemn fellowship of Christians (the Church of God), as being a Divine Institution. Very fit and necessary to be learned by all sorts of people in these perilous times. Acts ii. 47. Printed by J. L., for N. Bourne, and are to be sold at his shop, at the South Entrance of the Royal Exchange, in Cornhill, 1655.

Hosted by Google

THE TITLE

OF

REV. W. PERKINS' CATECHISM.

"The Foundation of the Christian Religion, gathered into Six Principles.

"And it is to be learned of ignorant people, that they may be fit to hear sermons with profit, and to receive the Lord's Supper with comfort. Psa. cxix. 130: 'The entrance into thy words sheweth light, and giveth understanding to the simple.' London: printed by John Legatt. 1606."

Mr. Perkins was a distinguished Puritan minister during the reign of Elizabeth. He was born in 1558, and was educated in Christ's College, Cambridge. He was elected Fellow of his College at the age of 24, and officiated at St. Andrew's Church with great success for nearly 20 years. He was deprived by Archbishop Whitgift. He died in 1602. His writings are numerous, and are comprised in three folio volumes. Job Orton says, respecting Mr. Perkins, "I think him an excellent writer. His style is the best of any of that age or the next; and many passages in his writings are equal to those of the best writers in modern times. He is judicious, clear, full of matter and deep Christian experience."

Hosted by Google

THE PREFACE

TO THE

EDITION OF THE CATECHISM PUBLISHED IN 1665.

Unto the former principles published by that reverend man, Mr. Will. Perkins, fully containing what every Christian is to believe touching God and himself, I have thought it fit, for the good of those especially over whom I am set (the younger sort of whom I have formerly catechised in private, according to the same principles), to annex a few others, touching the more Solemn Fellowship of Christians; the Church of God as being a Divine Institution, Rev. ii. 7; the Spiritual Paradise and Temple of the living God, 2 Cor. vi. 16; Rom. ix. 4; in which his most solemn services are to be performed; and to which he addeth daily such as be saved, promising to dwell in the midst of them by his most powerful and gracious presence.

John Robinson.

Hosted by Google

AN APPENDIX

TO

MR. PERKINS' SIX PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

Q. 1. What is the church?

A. A company of faithful and holy people, with their seed, called by the Word of God into public covenant with Christ and amongst themselves, for mutual fellowship in the use of all the means of God's glory and their salvation.

Q. 2. Of what sort or number of people must this company consist?

A. It is all one whether they be high or low, few or many; so as they exceed not such a number as may ordinarily meet together in one place for the worshipping of God and sanctification of the Lord's-day. Gal. iii. 28; Matt. xxviii. 17, 19; 1 Cor. xi. 17, 18, 20, xiv. 23; Acts xx. 7.

Q. 3. What are the reasons why the church must consist of faithful and holy people?

A. 1. The Scriptures everywhere so teach. Levit. xx. 26; Rom. i. 7, 8; 1 Cor. i. 2; Phil. i. 1—9.

2. The church is the body of Christ, all whose members, therefore, should be conformable in some measure to Him their Head. Eph. i. 22; Col. i. 18.

3. Only such worshippers please God, are accepted of him, and have right to the covenant of grace and seals thereof. John iv. 23; Heb. viii. 8—10, &c.; Jude, ver. 1; Ezek. xliv. 7.

Hosted by Google

Q. 4. But are not hypocrites mingled with the faithful in the church?

A. None ought to be by the Word of God, and where such are, they are not truly added by the Lord to the church, but do creep in through their own hypocrisy, and not without the church's sin also, if they may be discerned to be such.

Q. 5. By what means is the church gathered?

A. By the Word preached, and by faith received by them that hear it. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; Acts ii. 14, &c., xi. 19, xx. 21; Rom. i. 5; 1 Cor. xv. 1, 2.

Q. 6. Is every believer a member of the visible church?

A. No; but he must also, by his personal and public profession, adjoin himself to some particular fellowship and society of saints. Acts ii. 41, 47, viii. 37, ix. 18.

Q. 7. How prove you the seed of the faithful to be of the church with them?

A. By the covenant which God made with Abraham and his seed, which was the covenant of the gospel, and confirmed in Christ; the seal thereof, circumcision, being the seal of the righteousness of faith. Gen. xvii. 7, &c.

Q. 8. What are the essential marks of the church?

A. Faith and order, as the church in them may be seen, and be held to walk in Christ Jesus, whom she hath received. Faith professed in word and deed, showing the matter to be true; and order in the holy things of God, showing the forms to be true; which are the two essential parts of the church.* Gal. iii. 8, 16, 17; Rom. iv. 11; Col. ii. 5, 6.

Q. 9. Are not the preaching of the Word and administering of the sacraments certain marks of the true church?

A. No, for the Word may, and that rightly, be preached to assemblies of unbelievers for their conversion, as may the sacraments also (though unjustly) be administered unto them, and so be made lying signs. Besides, the true church may for a time want the use of divers ordinances of God, but hath always right unto them; as may also the false church usurp and abuse them, but without right.

* As true matter and form: or two essential parts of other things—as a house, temple, or tabernacle.

Hosted by Google

Matt. xxviii. 19; Acts xiv. 7, 14, xvii. 22, &c.; Gen. xxxiv. 24, Shechemites; 2 Kings xvii. 25, &c.; Hos. i. 9.

Q. 10. What are the means in and by which Christ and the church have fellowship together?

A. 1. In the gifts of the Spirit of Christ.

2. In the offices of ministry given to the church.

3. In the works done in and by those gifts and offices. 2 Cor. xii. 3—6.

Q. 11. Wherein standeth this communion of the Spirit?

A. In the in-dwelling and operation of the gifts and graces thereof conveyed from Christ, as the head, unto the church as his body, and members one of another. Whence ariseth that most strait and divine conjunction, by which, as by the civil bond of marriage the man and wife are one flesh, so they who are thus joined to Christ are one spirit. Eph. ii. 22, iv. 15, 19; 1 Cor. vi. 17.

Q. 12. How many are the offices of ministry in the church?

A. Five, besides the extraordinary offices of apostles, prophets, and evangelists, for the first planting of the churches, which are ceased, with their extraordinary gifts.

Q. 13. How is that proved?

A. Partly, by the Scriptures, which both mention them expressly, and describe them by their principal gifts and works; and partly, by reason agreeable to the Scriptures.

Q. 14. Show me which those offces be, with their answerable gifts and works?

A. 1. The pastor (exhorter), to whom is given the gift of wisdom for exhortation. 2. The teacher, to whom is given the gift of knowledge for doctrine. 3. The governing elder, who is to rule with diligence. Eph. iv. 11; 1 Cor. xii. 8; Rom. xii. 8; 1 Tim. v. 17. 4. The deacon, who is to administer the holy treasure with simplicity. 5. The widow or deaconess, who is to attend the sick and impotent with compassion and cheerfulness. Acts vi. 2—7; 1 Tim. iii. 8, 10, &c., v. 9, 10; Rom. xvi. 1.

Q. 15. What is the reason for the proving of these ministries?

A. Because these are necessary and these alone sufficient for the church, as being the most perfect society and body of Christ, which neither faileth in that which is

Hosted by Google

necessary, nor exceedeth in anything superfluous. 1 Cor. xii. 27; Eph. ii. 12, πολίτεια; ver. 19, συμπολῖται; Rom xii. 7, 8.

Q. 16. Whence ariseth the necessity and sufficiency of these ministries in the church?

A. From the condition, partly of the souls, and partly of the bodies of the members.

Q. 17. How doth that appear?

A. 1. In the soul is the faculty of understanding, about which the teacher is to be exercised for information by doctrine. 2. The will and affections upon which the pastor (exhorter) is especially to work by exhortation and comfort. 3. For that doctrine and exhortation without obedience are unprofitable, the diligence of the ruling elder is requisite for that purpose.

Q. 18. How are the other two ministries to be exercised?

A. As the church consisteth of men, and they of souls and bodies, so are the deacons, out of the church's treasure and contribution, to provide for the common uses of the church, relief of the poor, and maintenance of the officers, Acts vi. 1—3, iv. 35; Gal. vi. 6, κοινωνείτω; 1 Tim. v. 18; as are the widows to afford unto the sick and impotent in body, not able otherwise to help themselves, their cheerful and comfortable service. 1 Tim. v. 3, 9.

Q. 19. Wherefore call you those offices by the name of ministries or service?

A. For two causes:—1. For that they are no lordship, but mere services of Christ and of the church. Matt. xx. 25—27. 2. Because they consist in administering only of those things which are Christ's, and the church's under him. 1 Cor iii. 21—23, iv. 1; 2 Cor. iv. 5.

Q. 20. By whom are these officers to have their outward calling?

A. By the church, whereof they are members for the present, and to which they are to administer.

Q. 21. How doth that appear?

A. 1. The apostles, who taught only Christ's commandments, so directed the churches. Acts i. 15—23, vi. 1, 2, 3, 5.

2. The people, amongst whom they have been conversant, can best judge of their fitness, both in respect of their persons and families. Acts vi. 1—5; 1 Tim. iii. 2—5.

Hosted by Google

A. 3. It furthereth much the diligence and faithfulness of the minister, that they whose minister he is have freely chosen him, as unto whom under Christ they commit the most precious treasure of their souls; as also it binds the people to greater love and conscience of obedience of him and his ministry, whom themselves have made choice of. 1 Tim. v. 8.

4. The church being a most free corporation spiritual under Christ, the Lord, is in all reason and equity to choose her ministers and servants under him, unto whom, also, she is to give wages for their service and labour. Acts xiv. 23; 1 Tim. v. 17, 18.

Q. 22. Is this outward calling, of simple necessity, for a true church officer?

A. Yea, as for the magistrate in the city and commonwealth, or steward in the family, without which they usurp their places, how excellent soever, whether in their gifts or works. Heb. v. 4, 5.

Q. 23. What if the officer be found unfaithful in his place?

A. He is by the church to be warned to take heed to his ministry he hath received, to fulfil it; which, if he neglect to do, by the same power which set him up, he is to be put down and deposed, being dealt with as a brother. Col. iv. 17.

Q. 24. What are the outward works of the church's communion with Christ?

A. These six:—1. Prayer. 2. The reading and opening of the Word. 3. The sacraments. 4. Singing of Psalms. 5. Censures. 6. Contribution to the necessities of the saints.

Q. 25. Wherefore put you prayer in the first place?

A. Because by it all the rest are sanctified to the faithful. 1 Tim. ii. 1, iv. 5; Jude, ver. 20; Zech. xii. 10; Rom. viii. 15, 16. For prayer, see the end of the fifth principle, with the exposition;* only add this, that in the act of our speaking unto

* Q. What is prayer?

A. A familiar speech with God, in the name of Christ, 1 Tim. ii. 1; Phil. iv. 6, in which we either crave things needful, or give thanks for things received.

Q. In asking things needful, what is required?

A. Two things; an earnest desire, and faith.

Hosted by Google

God by prayer, we are not to use the help of any book, beads, crucifixes, or the like, to teach or provoke us, but only the help of the Spirit of adoption and prayer, working in our hearts effectually, and teaching us both what and how to pray as we ought.

Q. 26. What believe you, touching the Word?

A. Besides the things observed in the fifth principle and exposition, that the whole written Word, and it alone, is to be read and opened in the church.

Q. 27. Wherefore are the whole Scriptures to be read and opened?

A. Because the whole Word of God is pure, written for our learning and comfort, given by Divine inspiration, and is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction, and from which nothing may be diminished. Prov. xxx. 5, 6; Rom. xv. 4; Deut. iv. 2; 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.

Q. 28. How prove you that the Scriptures only are to be read, and opened in the church?

A. Because they alone are sufficient for faith, and the obedience which is of faith, and able to make the man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works; and unto which nothing may be added. John xx. 31; Heb. xi. 6; Rom. xvi. 17; Rev. xxi. 19.

Q. 29. Who are to open and apply the Scriptures in the church?

A. 1. Principally the bishops or elders, who, by the Word of Life, are to feed the flock, both by teaching and government. Acts xx. 28. 2. Such as are out of office, in the exercise of prophecy.

Q. 30. How is that exercise proved in the Scriptures?

Q. What things must a Christian man's heart desire?

A. Six things especially.

Q. What are they?

A. 1. That he may glorify God. 2. That God may reign in his heart, and not sin. That he may do God's will, and not the lusts of the flesh. 4. That he may rely himself on God's providence for all the means of his temporal life. 5. That he may be justified, and be at peace with God. 6. That, by the power of God, he may be strengthened against all temptations.

Q. What is faith?

A. A persuasion (Amen) that those things which we truly desire, God will grant them for Christ's sake.—"The fifth principle expounded," in Rev. W. Perkins' "Foundation of Christian Religion."

Hosted by Google

A. 1. By the examples in the Jewish Church, where men, though in no office, either in temple or synagogue, had liberty publicly to use their gifts. Luke ii. 42, 46, 47; iv. 16—18; Acts viii. 4, xi. 19—21, xiii. 14—16, xviii. 24—26.

2. By the commandments of Christ and his apostles. Luke ix. 1, x. 1; Rom. xii. 6—8; 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11; 1 Cor. xiv. 1.

3. By the prohibiting of women, not extraordinarily inspired, to teach in the church: herein liberty being given unto men (their husbands or others). 1 Tim. ii. 11, 12; 1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35.

4. By the excellent ends which, by this means, are to be obtained: as 1. The glory of God in the manifestation of his manifold graces, 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11. 2. That the gifts of the Spirit in men be not quenched, 1 Thess. v. 19. 3. For the fitting and trial of men for the ministry, 1 Tim. iii. 2, 4. For the preserving pure of the doctrine of the church, which is more endangered if some one or two alone may only be heard and speak, 1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25. 5. For debating and satisfying of doubts, if any do arise. 6. For the edifying of the church, and conversion of others, Acts ii. 42; Luke iv. 22, 23.

Q. 31. Who is a prophet in this sense?

A. He that hath a gift of the Spirit to speak unto edification, exhortation, and comfort. 1 Cor. xiv. 4, 24, 25.

Q. 32. What is the order of this exercise?

A. That it be performed after the public ministry by the teachers, and under their direction and moderation, whose duty it is, if anything be obscure, to open it; if doubtful, to clear it; if unsound, to refuse it; if unprofitable to supply what is wanting as they are able. 1 Cor. xiv. 3, 37; Acts xiii. 15.

Q. 33. What believe you touching the sacraments, further than is observed in the former principles?

A. That they are to be dispensed according to the tenure of the covenant of grace, whereof they are seals, in respect both of the persons to whom, and of the ends for which they are to be administered.

Q. 34. Which are those persons?

A. The faithful and their seed. Gen. xvii. 7; 1 Cor. vii. 14.

Hosted by Google

Q. 35. May all the faithful partake in the sacraments?

A. No, except they be added also to some particular congregation, unto which the public ordinances and ministry doth appertain. Acts ii. 41, 42, 47.

Q. 36. Which are the ends and uses of the sacraments?

A. The first, is from God to the church, opened in the exposition of the fifth principle, where it is shown what a sacrament is. The second, is from the church to God, in which it testifieth the acceptance of the covenant, and bindeth itself to the performance of the conditions. The third, is in respect of the members themselves, mutually, as being badges of their association. The fourth, in respect of all other assemblies, between whom and the churches they are notes of distinction. 1 Cor. xii. 13.

Q. 37. What is required touching singing of psalms in the church?

A. That they be such as are parts of the Word of God, formed by the Holy Ghost into psalms or songs, which many may conveniently sing together, exhorting and admonishing themselves mutually, with grace in their hearts. Matt. xxvi. 30; Eph. v. 19; Col. iii. 16.

Q. 38. What believe you touching the censure of excommunication?

A. That it is to be used by every particular church, according to the rules of Christ.

Q. 39. How prove you this power to be in every particular congregation?

A. 1. By donation and gift of Christ the Lord. Matt. xviii. 17—19. 2. The particular church of Corinth had this power, for the neglect whereof it is reproved by the apostle. 1 Cor. v. 13. 3. Every particular church hath right to the Word, sacraments, and prayer, within itself, which are greater, and therefore to this, which is lesser than they.

Q. 40. What are the rules of Christ for excommunication?

A. 1. The sin thus to be censured must be scandalous, and the person obstinate, after due conviction and patience used. 2. The church excommunicating must be that particular congregation gathered together in the name of Christ, whereof the sinner is a member. Matt. xviii. 15—17, 19; 1 Cor. v. 4, 5, 11.

Hosted by Google

Q. 41. How prove you that by the church, Matt. xviii. 17, is not meant the bishop or presbytery representing the body?

A. 1. One man cannot be a church, which, as Christ teacheth Matt. xviii. 19, 20, must be a company, how small soever, gathered together in his name.

2. The word there used never signifieth in the Scriptures an officer or officers, excluding the people.

3. The apostle, 1 Cor. v. 4, expounds Christ's meaning to be of the whole body come together.

4. The elders, being public officers, are to exercise the solemn works of their office; and particularly the work of rebuking them that sin openly and before the church, both that others may fear, and the church, of faith, consent to the excommunication; and, therefore, cannot represent the church, it being actually present. 1 Tim. v. 20.

5. A representative church, in a case of faith and conscience, without the consent of the represented in the particular decree, established the popish doctrine of implicit faith.

Q. 42. What is the order of proceeding in this censure?

A. That the brother offending be admonished privately, and after (without his repentance) with a witness or two, who may give testimony both of the offence and admonition; and lastly, that by the brother admonishing with his witnesses (the sinner remaining obstinate), complaint be made to the church, which last complaint alone is sufficient in public offences.

Q. 43. What order is to be observed after complaint thus made?

A. The officers and the governors of the church are by the Scriptures clearly to convince and seriously to admonish and exhort the offender, and upon his impenitence, with due conviction and patience, to decree against him the sentence of excommunication; and lastly, with the people's free consent, to pronounce and execute the same.

Q. 44. How appeareth the necessity of this ordinance?

A. Many ways: 1. By the commandment of Christ, and practice of the apostolical churches. Matt. xviii. 15; 1 Cor. v. 4.

2. For the glory of Christ, which is much impeached by the profaneness of those who profess his service. Rom. ii. 24.

Hosted by Google

3. For the humbling of the sinner, and the salvation of his soul. 1. Cor. v. 4—8.

4. To prevent the infection of others. Heb. xii. 15.

5. That by the zeal and holiness of the church, they without may be gained by the gospel.

Q. 45. How is the church to walk towards a person excommunicated?

A. So as they may make him ashamed, by withdrawing from him all spiritual communion, and civil familiarity also, so far as may be without the violation of any natural or civil bond. 2 Thess. iii. 6—11; 1 Cor. v. 11.

Q. 46. What is to be observed for the church's contribution?

A. That in their public meeting [every first day of the week]* they contribute as God hath prospered them to the public treasury, 1 Cor. xvi. 1, by the deacons to be received and distributed as there is need, to the relief of the poor, maintenance of the ministry, and other necessary uses of the church first, and after, of others also, as need requireth. Acts vi. 1—4; Gal. vi. 10; Rom. xv. 26. And whosoever will walk according to this rule, peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God. Gal. vi. 16.

Amen. JOHN ROBINSON.

* The words in brackets are in the London Edition, without printer's or publisher's name, 1642, and, so far as can be ascertained, in no other.

Hosted by Google

APPENDIX.

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google

No. I.

THE CHURCH IN SOUTHWARK.

BY JOHN WADDINGTON,

PASTOR OF THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UNION STREET, SOUTHWARK.

An intimate relationship existed between the church at Leyden and the "faithful brethren" in Southwark, recognized by Robinson, in a letter addressed to them, April 5, 1624, on the removal of their first pastor, as a "true church." The object of this paper is to trace the incidents which led to its formation, and to give a rapid sketch of its subsequent course.

In 1586, we find John Greenwood, B.A., a close prisoner in the Clink, Southwark, for his testimony to the simple church polity of the New Testament.* On the Lord's-day morning, the 19th of November, in the same year, he was visited by his devoted friend and fellow-collegian, Henry Barrowe, B.A., the enlightened and zealous advocate, with himself, of congregational principles. The keeper of the prison took advantage of this visit of condolence, to secure an additional captive; and in a quarter of an hour, while these companions in the faith were conversing together, he turned the key upon them both.† At one

* Hanb. Hist. Mem. vol. i. p. 62. Hist. of Corpus Christi, Camb. By R. Masters, B.D. 1753, 4to. page 229.

† Harleian Miscel. orig. ed. 4to., vol. iv. page 326.

Hosted by Google

o'clock, Barrowe was put into a boat, and as he was rowed to Lambeth, in the custody of the pursuivant, a letter was placed in his hand, explaining the cause of his arrest. On landing at the palace, he was brought before the commissioners, specially summoned by Archbishop Whitgift for the occasion, and subjected to an examination intended to involve him in the meshes of prelatical power.

At a subsequent period, these noble confessors were, twice, taken in a cart to the foot of the gallows, and by alternate threats and expostulations, urged to recant. They adhered to their convictions, however, and shortly afterward suffered together, on the 6th of May, 1593, attesting, in this way, by a kind of triple martyrdom, their firm persuasion of the truth.* In the "Dialogues of Governor Bradford," an interesting account is given of Barrowe's conversion.†

During an imprisonment, which extended over five or six years, Barrowe and Greenwood found opportunity, though not without difficulty, to write in defence of their scriptural views, and sent their manuscripts to Holland for publication. Amongst other important documents transmitted for this purpose, was a treatise containing their joint answer to the writings of Giffard. Respecting this prison production, the "Ancient Men," in Governor Bradford's "Dialogues," relate the following particulars:—

"When Mr. Barrowe's and Mr. Greenwood's refutation of Giffard was privately in printing in this city (Middleburgh), Francis Johnson not only was a means to discover it, but was made the ambassador's instrument to intercept them (the copies) at the press, and see them burnt; the which charge he did so well perform, as he let them go on until they were wholly finished, and then, by the magistrate's authority, caused them to be speedily burnt; himself standing by until they were all consumed to ashes. Only he took up two of them, one to keep in his own study, that he might see their errors, and the other to bestow on a special friend for the like use. But mark the sequel. When he had done this work, he went home and superficially

* Ainsworth's Apology, 1604, pages 89—95.

† Hanb. Hist. Mem. vol. i. page 49; Young's Chronicles, page 433.

Hosted by Google

read some things here and there, as his fancy led him. At length, he met with something that begun to work upon his spirit, which so wrought with him, as drew him to this resolution,—seriously to read over the whole book; the which he did once and again. In the end, he was so taken, and his conscience was troubled so, as he could have no rest in himself until he crossed the seas, and came to London to confer with the authors, who were then in prison, and shortly after executed. After which conference, he was so satisfied and confirmed in the truth, as he never returned to his place any more at Middleburgh, but adjoined himself to their society at London, and was afterwards committed to prison, and then banished: and in conclusion, coming to live at Amsterdam, he caused the same books which he had been an instrument to burn, to be new printed, and set out at his own charge. And some of us here present testify this to be a true relation, which we heard from his own mouth before many witnesses."*

Francis Johnson Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge, concerning whom the preceding statement is made, became the leader of a Christian society, meeting (1593) in No. 80 Nicholas-lane, Lombard-street, a place not far distant from Southwark, on the opposite bank of the river.† His views did not coincide entirely with those of the Congregational order; but for his zeal, intrepidity, and self-denying devotedness, his name is worthy of enduring remembrance. "My care and desire," he says, "I thank God, have been, and I trust, shall be alway, to receive and follow the truth in love, with peace and holiness." He is referred to, in terms of great esteem and affection, by John Penry, M.A., the Nonconformist martyr, who was executed at St. Thomas-a-Watering, Old Kent-road, Southwark, May 29, 1593. In the letter, dated April 24, 1593, from his cell, King's Bench prison, then on the north of St. George's church, Borough, that devoted champion for truth and freedom writes in this affecting strain:—"I thank my God, I am not only ready to be bound and banished, but even to die in this cause, by his strength. Yea, my brethren, I greatly long, in regard of myself, to

* Young's Chron. pages 424, 5. † Hanb. Hist. Mem. vol. i. page 87.

Hosted by Google

be dissolved, and to live in the blessed kingdom of heaven, with Jesus Christ and his angels; with Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Job, David, Jeremiah, Daniel, Paul, the great apostle of the Gentiles, and the rest of the holy saints, both men and women; with the glorious kings, prophets, and martyrs, and witnesses of Jesus Christ, that have been from the beginning of the world; particularly with my two dear brethren, Mr. Henry Barrowe and Mr. John Greenwood, which have, last of all, yielded their blood for this precious 'testimony;' confessing unto you, my brethren and sisters, that if I might live upon the earth the days of Methuselah twice told, and that in no less comfort than Peter, James, and John were in the Mount; and after this life, might be sure of 'the kingdom of heaven,' that yet to gain all this, I durst not go from the former 'testimony.' . . . . . I would indeed, if it be His good pleasure, live yet with you, to help you to bear that grievous and hard yoke which yet ye are like to sustain, either here or in a strange land.

"And, my good brethren, seeing banishment, with loss of goods, is likely to betide you all, prepare yourselves for this hard entreaty, and rejoice that you are made worthy for Christ's cause to suffer and bear all things. And I beseech you, 'in the bowels of Jesus Christ,' that none of you, in this case, look upon his particular estate; but regard the general state of the church of God, that the same may go, and be kept together, whithersoever it shall please God to send you.

"Let not those of you, then, that either have stocks in your hands, or some likely trades to live by, dispose of yourselves where it may be most commodious for your outward estate, and, in the mean time, suffer the poor ones, that have no such means, either to bear the whole work upon their weak shoulders, or to end their days in sorrow and mourning, for want of outward and inward comforts, in the land of strangers; for the Lord will be an avenger of all such dealings. But consult with the whole church, yea, with the brethren of other places, how the church may be kept together and built, whithersoever they go. Let not the poor and the friendless be forced to stay behind here, and to break a good conscience, for want of your support

Hosted by Google

and kindness unto them, that they may go with you. And here I humbly beseech you, not in any outward regard, as I shall answer before my God, that you would take my poor and desolate widow, and my mess of fatherless and friendless orphans, with you into exile, whithersoever you go: and you shall find, I doubt not, that the blessed promises of my God made unto me and mine, will accompany them, and even the whole church, for their sakes; for this also is the Lord's promise unto the holy seed; as you shall not need much to demand what they shall eat, or wherewith they shall be clothed; and in short time, I doubt not but they will be found helpful and not burdensome to the church: only, I beseech you, let them not continue in this land, where they must be forced to go again into Egypt, and my God will bless you even with a joyful return into your own country for it. There are of you, I doubt not, will be careful of the performance of the will of your dead brother, in this point, who may yet live to show this kindness unto yours: I will say no more.

"Be kind, loving, and tender-hearted, the one of you towards the other; labour every way to increase love, and to show the duties of love one of you towards another; by visiting, comforting, and relieving one the other, even for 'the reproach of the heathen' that are round about us, as the Lord saith. Be watching in prayer; especially remember those of our brethren that are especially endangered. . . . . Pray for them, my brethren, and for our brother, Mr. Francis Johnson, and for me, who am likely to end my days either with them or before them; that our God may spare us unto his church, if it be his good pleasure, or give us exceeding faithfulness. And be every way comfortable unto the sister and wife of the dead, I mean unto my beloved M. Barrowe and M. Greenwood, whom I most heartily salute, and desire much to be comforted in their God, who, by his blessings from above, will countervail unto them the want of so notable a brother and a husband. I would wish you earnestly to write, yea, to send, if you may, to comfort the brethren in the west and north countries, that they faint not in these troubles; and that also you may have of their advice, and they of yours, what to do in these desolate times. . . Yea, I wish you and

Hosted by Google

them to be together, if you may, whithersoever you shall be banished, and to this purpose, to bethink you beforehand where to be; yea, to send some who may be meet to prepare you some resting-place. And, be all of you assured, that He who is your God in England, will be your God in any land under the whole heaven; for the earth and the fulness thereof are his, and blessed are they that for his cause are bereaved of any part of the same."*

He died in faith. In the "Protestation before his Death," addressed to the Lord Treasurer, he says:—"Being now to end my days before I am come to the one half of my years, in the likely course of nature, I leave the success of my labours unto such of my countrymen as the Lord is to raise after me."

The righteous succession was maintained. Francis Johnson, one of the "specially endangered," took the place of the martyrs, Greenwood and Barrowe, and while a prisoner in the Clink, in 1596, wrote in defence of Separation.

Henry Jacob, M.A., beneficed at Cheriton, in Kent, entered into a controversy with him, conducted on both sides with great earnestness and ability. The publisher of Jacob's treatises on the "Defence of the Churches and Ministry of England," tells us in the preface, that "Mr. Jacob, having some speech with certain of the Separation, concerning their peremptory and utter separation from the churches of England, was requested by them, briefly to set down in writing, his reason for the defence of the said churches, and they would either yield unto his proofs, or procure an answer unto the same. Whereupon, the argument following this preface, was set down in writing by Mr. Jacob, which the said parties did send to Mr. F. Johnson, being then a prisoner in the Clink, Southwark."

In reply to the argument that the martyrs of the Reformation did not formally separate themselves from the Establishment, Mr. Johnson writes: "When M. Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, &c., died martyrs for the truth of Christ, they neither had themselves, nor joined in spiritual communion with such as had, the prelacy and ministry now

* Hanb. Hist. Mem. vol. i. page 78. Strype's Whitgift, App. XVIII. Bk. iv. page 176.

Hosted by Google

pleaded for; and not that only, but were members of that persecuted church in Queen Mary's days, which was separated from the rest of the land as from the world, and joined in covenant by voluntary profession to obey the truth of Christ, and to witness against the abominations of Antichrist. As they also did unto death in the truth they saw, though otherwise, being but as it were in the twilight of the gospel, they had their wants and errors. Yet who is so blind or besotted, as not to see that their errors may not be our rules, neither can be our warrant; but rather that we ought, after their example, faithfully to stand in and for whatsoever truth God revealeth unto us by his Word? And that otherwise these holy martyrs shall rise in judgment against all such, as either withhold the truth in unrighteousness, or in any respect refuse to walk therein.

"Finally, seeing God hath given us his Word to be the light to our feet, and ruler of our lives and religion, what mean you to lead us from it, to the aberrations of any men whatsoever? Should not all people inquire at God, or would you have us to go from the living to the dead? from God and his Word, to men and their errors?"*

Henry Jacob was gained to the side of truth and became in turn the able and consistent defender of Scriptural Congregationalism. He published, in 1604, a treatise on the "Necessity of Reforming our Churches in England;" this was followed by his work on 'Toleration' in 1609: and in the succeeding year appeared his treatise on "The Divine Beginning and Institution of Christ's true Visible or Ministerial Church." This church, he defines to be "a number of faithful people joined, by their willing consent, in a spiritual outward society, or body-politic, ordinarily coming together into one place; instituted by Christ in his New Testament, and having the power to exercise ecclesiastical government, and all God's other spiritual ordinances, the means of salvation, in and for itself immediately from Christ."

At this period he was at Leyden, in close conference with Robinson. "We, some of us, knew Mr. Parker, Dr. Ames, and Mr. Jacob, in Holland," say the "Ancient Men," "when they sojourned for a time in Leyden, and all three boarded

* Johnson's Answer to Maister H. Jacob, his Defence, &c. 1600, p. 29.

Hosted by Google

together; . . . . and after Mr. Jacob returned, and Mr. Parker was at Amsterdam, he printed some of his books."*

The return of Mr. Jacob here mentioned was in 1616. The work of the greatest difficulty, and that which was attended with the most serious peril, was to continue the "testimony borne by the confessors and martyrs in the immediate scene of their sufferings."

For this arduous service Mr. Jacob was eminently qualified, by his talents, his courage, his discretion and humility. He came to Southwark, the 'furnace' of Evangelical nonconformity, to collect the remnant of the London congregation, and to form them into a church state, on the model of the New Testament. The first meeting of this martyr-band was held in a private dwelling, on the southern bank of the Thames. The names of Staismore,† Browne, Prior, Almey, Troughton, Allen, Gilbert, Farre and Goodal, are mentioned as present on that memorable occasion. "These, with others (we are told), having observed a day of solemn fasting and prayer for a blessing upon their undertaking, towards the close of the solemnity, each of them made open confession of their faith in our Lord Jesus Christ: and then, standing together, they joined hands, and solemnly covenanted with each other in the presence of Almighty God, to walk together in all God's ways and ordinances, according as He had already revealed, or should further make them known to them. Mr. Jacob was then chosen pastor by the suffrage of the brotherhood, and others were appointed to the office of deacons, with fasting and prayer and imposition of hands.‡

* Governor Bradford's Dialogues in Young's Chronicles, pages 439—440.

† Doubtless the Mr. Staresmore referred to in Mr. Robinson's letter to the Church in London, page 384, *supra*.

‡ "These fathers of Independency, in that old house of the seventeenth [or rather sixteenth] century, with hearts panting for religious liberty, their hands locked in each other, and solemnly vowing before God, to follow the light he should grant them, has in it a touch of the moral sublime, which, though the background of the picture differs, and the spirit which animated that forgotten band was peaceful instead of warlike, reminds us of the oath of Rutli, and the three-and-thirty who clasped hands under the Seelisberg, by the Lake of Uri, swearing before God the famous league of Swiss liberty."—Stoughton's Spiritual Heroes, p. 92, second edit. Hanb. Hist. Mem. vol. i. p. 293.

Hosted by Google

A declaration of their principles was printed in the same year, accompanied by a petition to James I. This document,* remarkable for the elevation of its sentiments, the sobriety of its diction, and the cogency of its reasoning, will reward the attention of all who take an interest in the march of Christian civilisation. From the charter of man's redemption, the writer asserts, in the name of his brethren, their claim to the full measure of Christian liberty, freedom of inquiry, freedom of association, freedom of worship, freedom of instruction, and freedom in the support of Christian ordinances—freedom in fine, based on conscience, regulated by truth, and perfected in charity.

After a service of eight years, Mr. Jacob, with the consent of his congregation, crossed the Atlantic, to join the pilgrims in America. His motive for this removal was the desire of extended usefulness.† But his career was near its close. He reached the pilgrims only to mingle his remains with kindred dust: but his testimony cannot die. With prophetic confidence he said, "The Lord, I doubt not, will raise up others that shall more effectually bear witness unto this truth in due time. Being with much vehemency charged that for no just cause I have refused to conform to the church order in England, I could therefore do no less but give out, yea, unto POSTERITY, the true and most important reasons o f my dissenting herein."

The pilgrims were impelled by the same motive to depart Leyden. Evidence of this is furnished in a small volume printed in 1619 (the year before the sailing of the "Mayflower"), entitled "An Answer to the Ten Counter Demands, &c., &c. by William Euring."

In answer to the demand, whether the discipline of the Separatists can be of God, since they gain no converts from the "rude and profane," Mr. Euring says, "Consider, sir, we are a poor, weak, despised people here in England, hated and persecuted of all, or most part in the land; and, therefore, if we have any meetings or coming together on the Lord's-day, they must be very private, for fear of such persecuting adversaries as cannot endure, and are ignorant of the truth of God's ordinances, to be taught and practised; so that 'Papists and Atheists,' and such like 'profane' come not at our exercises: and how

* Hanb. Hist. Mem. v. i. p. 293. † Ibid. p. 235.

Hosted by Google

is it possible we should convert any that come not to hear us? Amongst the churches in this way, beyond the seas, which have their more free meetings and able ministries, this blessing of God, in converting men, is more seen.

"Your following words, wherein you please to term us 'refined reformers,' saying that we seduce only the sound, and pervert and estrange from you those that are otherwise well affected, and of some understanding, &c., are worth considering.

"It is true, that you say, our cause hath wrought most upon such as have some 'understanding' and knowledge, and are of tender consciences, pliable to the truth; others, of more corrupt consciences, have set against us, and against our cause, and blasphemed it."

In answer to the demand, "Whether it were not the Separatists' best course to return, or, for the avoiding of scandal, to remove to Virginia, and make a colony there, in hope to convert Infidels to Christianity," Mr. Euring says, "Although I can partly guess in what humour you propounded this your demand, yet I will not answer you according to that your humour.

. . . "I do once again entreat you to show us the true form and fashion of your church; and lay you apart all wrath and envious anger, that so we may together, in peace and love, you with us, and we with you, take a view, and consider of your church, and compare the form and fashion thereof with the form and fashion of the true and visible church of Christ, as it is described unto you in the Scripture. And if this good and godly course may be accomplished, not only by myself, but all of us that are now separated from you, would much more willingly and gladly return again, and labour to plant ourselves again in the meanest part of England, to enjoy 'peace with holiness,' and to follow the truth in love, among our kindred and friends in our own native country, than either to continue where now many of us live, or to plant ourselves in Virginia, or in any other country in the world, upon any conditions, or hope of anything in this life whatsoever! Yet even for Virginia thus much—when some of ours desired to have planted ourselves there, with his majesty's leave, upon

Hosted by Google

these three grounds:—first, THAT THEY MIGHT BE THE MEANS OF RE-PLANTING THE GOSPEL AMONGST THE HEATHEN; secondly, that they might live under the king's government; thirdly, that they might make way for and unite with others, what in them lieth, whose consciences are grieved with the state of the church in England; the bishops did, by all means, oppose them and their friends therein."*

A faithful successor to Mr. Jacob was found in John Lathrop, a man of earnest but humble spirit, who, for conscience sake, relinquished orders in the Establishment. On the 29th April, 1632, forty-two of the members (including their devoted minister) were apprehended, and sentenced to imprisonment for two years.

"During the term of Mr. Lathrop's imprisonment," says Nathaniel Morton, author of 'New England's Memorial,' published in 1669, "his wife fell sick, of which sickness she died. He procured liberty of the bishop to visit his wife before her death, and commended her to God by prayer, who soon after gave up the ghost. At his return to prison, his poor children being many, repaired to the bishop at Lambeth, and made known unto him their miserable condition, by reason of their good father's being continued in close durance, who commiserated their condition so far as to grant him liberty, who soon after came over into New England."

With thirty of his congregation he arrived in Boston, 18th September, 1634, in the ship "Griffin," and in a few days after he proceeded to an early settlement, in the wilderness called Scituate, not many miles from Barnstable, upon Cape Cod.

Though deprived of the counsel of their pastor, the brethren in Southwark were not left without the means of spiritual sustenance. Mr. Canne, author of the "Marginal Reference Bible," in the earlier part of his career, as well as Mr. Jessey, sometime rector of St. George's, ministered to their comfort and instruction. In the first instance, Mr. Jessey declined the overture made to him on the part of the church, on the ground that he had an earnest desire to settle in New England. The people reminded him that, inasmuch as their necessities were greater, their claim on

* An Answer &c., by Will. Euring, pages 7—9.

Hosted by Google

his services was the stronger. They said, "New England was much better provided with able godly preachers than this nation, in the which so many flocks were destitute."*

"After Mr. Canne," says Mr. Neal, the historian of the Puritans, "Mr. Samuel How undertook the pastoral care of this little flock." During his ministry the church endured great affliction, and to avoid the violence of persecution, its members were often compelled to meet in the fields and woods. On the death of Mr. How, after an interval of bereavement, Mr. Stephen More, a beloved and faithful deacon, at the request of the brethren accepted the oversight of them. He was a man of property, and had valuable connexions in the City; but at the hazard of his estate, and of personal liberty, he did not shrink from the duties of his self-denying office. [An interesting work written by him, entitled, "The Wise Gospel Preacher," is still extant.] The face of affairs beginning now to change, this poor congregation, which had subsisted almost by a miracle for above twenty-four years, shifting from place to place to avoid the notice of the public, ventured to open their doors in Deadman's-place; but it was not long before they were discovered, and many of them committed to prison.†

On the 18th of January, 1641, the church being assembled on the Lord's-day for religious worship as usual, though not with their former secrecy, they were discovered and taken, and by Sir John Lenthall, Marshal of the King's Bench, committed to the Clink prison. The next morning, six or seven of the men were summoned to appear before the House of Lords: their names are given in the Journals of the Lords, vol. iv. p. 133: Edw. Chillendon, Nic. Tyne, John Webb, Richard Sturges, Thomas Gunn, Jo. Ellis. The Lords examined them strictly concerning their principles, and they as freely acknowledged that they owned no other head of the church but Christ Jesus; that no prince had power to make laws to bind the consciences of men: and, that laws made contrary to the law of God were of no force. "Thereupon the House did order that the said sectaries should receive for this time

* Life of Jessey, p. 8. † Neal, vol. i. ch. vi.

Hosted by Google

an admonition from the House, that they shall hereafter repair to their several parish churches to hear Divine service, and to give obedience thereunto, according to the Acts of Parliament of this realm. To that purpose the order was read unto them, made by the House the 16th of January, 1640, and to be told that, if hereafter they do not observe these commands, they shall be severely punished according to law." Some of the peers inquired where the place of their meeting was, and intimated that they would come and hear them. And accordingly three or four of the peers did go to their meeting on the Lord's-day following, to the great surprise and wonder of many. The people went on in their usual method, having two sermons, in both of which they treated of those principles for which they had been accused, grounding their discourses on the words of our Saviour, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Matt. xxviii. 18. After this, they received the Lord's Supper, and then made a collection for the poor, to which the lords contributed liberally with them, and at their departure signified their satisfaction at what they had heard and seen, and their inclination to come again. But this made too much noise, and gave too great an alarm to the mob, for them to venture a second time.*

After this excitement the church seems to have enjoyed an interval of rest. The calm, however, was but temporary, and was followed by a succession of persecuting enactments, aiming at nothing less than the annihilation of Nonconformity. Within twelve years the Parliament passed six laws for this object: the Corporation Act, in 1661; the Act of Uniformity, in 1662; an Act to suppress Seditious Conventicles, 1664; declaring it to be a transportable offence for more than five persons to unite in religious worship, except according to the forms of the Church of England; the Oxford, or Five Mile Act, in 1665, banishing all Nonconformists from corporate towns; the Conventicle Act, in 1670, with some severe additions; and the Test Act, in 1673.

The storm was violent and of long continuance, but the

* Crosby, Hist. Bap. vol. iii. p. 40.

Hosted by Google

immortal confessors of religious freedom braved it out. Strong in their weakness, and sheltered in their obscurity, they could not be subdued. Amid the desolations caused by the plague, and the fire of London, in 1666, they found an entrance for the Gospel. In the absence of the court and clergy, who fled from the infected capital, these "spiritual heroes" gained converts from the afflicted remnant.

Thomas Wadsworth, M.A., a native of Southwark, the successor of Stephen More, we find at that calamitous period making collections for his distressed brethren at Deadman's-place,* and dispensing to the people the Word of Life. Richard Baxter says, "The churches being burnt, and the parish ministers gone, for want of place or maintenance, the Nonconformists were more resolute than ever to preach till they were imprisoned. Mr. Wadsworth and others, he tells us, did keep their meetings very openly, and prepared large rooms, and some of them plain chapels, with pulpits, seats, and galleries, for the reception of as many as could come." [The timber edifice at Deadman's-place was of this character, and stood on the present site of the Park-street Brewery, at a short distance from the Globe Theatre.] In 1677, the author of the "Saint's Rest" occupied himself the pulpit of this ancient sanctuary. Referring to this interesting circumstance, he writes, "It pleased God to take away that excellent faithful minister (Mr. Wadsworth) in Southwark; and just when I was kept out at Swallow-street, his flock invited me to Southwark, where, though I refused to be their pastor, I preached many months in peace, there being no justice willing to disturb us." Calamy gives this short account of the next minister, Mr. James Lambert:—"He was a celebrated preacher in Southwark, and had a considerable congregation of Dissenters there. He succeeded Mr. Wadsworth. He died August 9th, 1689, and was buried at Bunhill." His successor, Jonathan Owen, published a sermon in 1700, dedicated to his congregation in Deadman's-place. During his pastorate, the four silver cups, still used by the church, were introduced; the date,

* Life of Wadsworth, printed for Thomas Parkhurst, 1680.

Hosted by Google

1691, is engraven on each cup. Mr. Killinghall was chosen pastor about 1702, and was followed, in 1740, by Dr. Zephaniah Marryat, who died Sept. 15th, 1754, not many hours after having preached to his congregation from this text: "Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you." Mr. Lamb was pastor from 1755 to 1762. His identity in this honourable lineage, like that of Mr. Owen, is proved by a discourse published with a dedication to the church in Deadman's-place. He was held in great esteem. On his removal, from failing health, Dr. James Watson was elected to the pastorate, and during a ministry of twenty years discharged the duties of his office with exemplary fidelity. He was the tutor of Alexander Cruden, compiler of the "Concordance," whose remains were deposited in the burial ground adjoining the chapel, in 1770.

Dr. Humphrys,—uncle of Mr. Hanbury,*—and whose memory is precious to many, accepted the pastoral care of this ancient church in 1783; four years after his settlement, the congregation removed from Deadman's-place to Union-street, where they still worship.

Subsequently, for more than twenty years, Mr. Arundel, the late excellent secretary of the London Missionary Society, laboured amongst them.

Further it is not needful to trace the history of this

* Benjamin Hanbury, Esq. the senior deacon of the Church, and the venerable compiler of the "Historical Memorials relating to the Independents or Congregationalists: from their Rise to the Restoration of the Monarchy, A.D. MDCLX.," 3 vols. 8vo., London, 1839, so frequently referred to in the notes of this work. The "Memorials" are a valuable compendium of all the extant or known writings of the Independent and Congregationalist brotherhood, during the period specified in the title-page. They supply authentic materials for the History of Independency. No ecclesiastical library can be complete without the "Memorials," nor should any Nonconformist, especially, deem his library properly furnished without these precious records of the life, labours, and writings of his noble ancestors. Mr. Hanbury is also well known in the literary world by his edition of "The Ecclesiastical Polity, and other works of Richard Hooker," &c., 3 vols., 8vo., London, 1830—to which he has supplied numerous and copious illustrative notes, and "Life of Thomas Cartwright, B.D.;" and by various other publications.

Hosted by Google

witnessing community. From the rapid sketch now given, the links of the historic chain, extending through nearly three centuries, may be distinctly traced. In no part of its eventful course has the church departed from its first principles in doctrine and discipline. It has long been distinguished for its unity and affection, and has ever maintained a character for practical usefulness.

Supplement by the Editor.

A new era is now dawning on this ancient church. The building in which it has long worshipped must shortly be relinquished; its lease having nearly expired. Efforts are being made to remove from the present obscure locality in which it worships, and to erect, in a more public situation, a chapel worthy of its name and history; and "to connect therewith a Pilgrim's Hall and Library, in which shall be securely deposited every document or publication that can be procured to elucidate the course and extend the influence of the pilgrim-fathers—those immortal pioneers of religious freedom." Appeals have been widely circulated through England and America, to which most cheering and cordial responses have been given. Most gratifying assurances of interest and support have been tendered by Abbot Lawrence, Esq., Ambassador of the United States to the English court; the Hon. Amos Lawrence, brother of the ambassador; the Rev. Dr. Cheever, and numerous other distinguished gentlemen and ministers of America; and especially by the Rev. Seth Bliss, and Rev. E. A. Lawrence, who, on July 28th, 1851, met the congregation in their time-hallowed sanctuary, and assured them of their deep personal interest in the undertaking; and also that they were authorised by their brethren in America to assure them of the sympathy they felt in the object, and of their readiness to co-operate with the church in its accomplishment.

With the new Pilgrim Chapel a new impulse will be given to the zeal and labours of this ancient church with its bishop and deacons; and thus will the sacred principles they have so long and consistently maintained, be more widely diffused, and through a long succession of years increased and perpetuated.

Hosted by Google

No. II.

THE EXILES AND THEIR CHURCHES IN HOLLAND.

BY THE EDITOR.

The commerce and manufactures so extensively carried on by the Dutch during the latter part of the 16th and the beginning of the 17th centuries, had induced many British merchants and others to settle in the principal towns of the United Provinces.

The wars threatened by Spain against Holland impelled the Dutch to make application to the English government for assistance against their common foe. Treaties were formed between Queen Elizabeth and the Seigniors, by which England engaged to furnish both troops and money to her allies, on certain conditions, for the secure fulfilment of which some important towns were to be held by the British forces. This alliance between the two governments occasioned the residence of an additional number of British subjects in the Netherlands.

One article of the treaty of 1585 contains a stipulation that the Dutch "will permit to the governor and garrison the free exercise of religion as in England, and to this end a church will be provided for them in each town."

The places of worship thus provided for the British troops, were open also to other British residents who might choose to frequent them.

Grants were also made from the public treasury, on application, to assist the merchants and settlers elsewhere in establishing worship according to their respective opinions.

Hosted by Google

Hence at Amsterdam, the Hague, Arnheim, Middleburg, Leyden, Rotterdam, Bruges, and other towns, English worship was constantly performed in buildings erected or appropriated for that purpose by the government, as well as in the garrison and military chapels appointed according to treaty.*

Other British subjects were finding their way to Holland during this period. Humble and godly men, they would have gladly remained in their native land. Neither military glory nor commercial enterprise forced their expatriation. Religious persecution, under episcopal tyranny, had well nigh impoverished and ruined them; and still threatened the extinction of their liberties, if not of their lives. Many of their companions and predecessors had fallen victims to the fury of the ecclesiastical oppressor. Royalty, too, instead of throwing its shield of protection over all its subjects, had hurled its denunciations against such as should dare to question its prerogatives in religion, or refuse to obey its imperious mandates. At the gibbet, and the stake, as well as in the awful, death-producing dungeons, many a "martyr of Nonconformity" had sealed his testimony for truth and conscience.

Puritans, Anabaptists, Romanists, Separatists, were names odious to the authorities; and hence the extermination, imprisonment, or banishment of all, to whom they applied such names, was resolved on. Thacker, Copping, Barrowe, Greenwood, Penry, Dennis, were among the public martyrs of Independency; while a larger host of Baptist worthies, both English, and also Dutch who had come to England for protection against the horrible inquisition set up by Spain in Holland, had been even more obnoxious to the powers that be, and "were tortured, not accepting deliverance," and stand high on the roll of martyr fame.† During the early part of the reign of Eliza-

* *Vide* Steven's History of the Scottish Church, Rotterdam, 8vo. 1833; Sumner's Memoirs of the Pilgrims at Leyden, Appendix, No. 1, page 24; Rev. A. S. Thelwell's Preface to the Heidelberg Catechism of the Reformed Religion, reprinted in London, 1851.

† *Vide* Price's History of Nonconformity; Fletcher's History of Independency; Martyrs of Nonconformity in the Days of Queen Elizabeth, by the Anti-State-Church Association; and the Dutch Martyrology, by Hanserd Knollys Society.

Hosted by Google

beth, numbers fled to Holland to escape the death which threatened them; and at a later period, when the folly of killing men to convert them was perceived, and banishment or imprisonment was tried to prevent defection from the established church, others followed the example, and became exiles to the United Provinces, where liberty of conscience and of worship was freely allowed.

Many of these exiles being Puritans, and not Separatists, attached themselves to the congregations of the English settlers in various parts of the provinces; while some of their pastors, who had accompanied or followed them, became ministers of these English churches. The Rev. Francis Johnson was one of this class, and became minister of the English congregation at Middleburg. The order of worship was chiefly Presbyterian, as distinguished alike from the episcopal and the congregational. Such exiles as were Separatists or Brownists worshipped either privately, or in less prominent places than those occupied by their merely Puritan brethren.

One of the earliest of these Separatists, and whose name was attached to the entire party for a season, was

ROBERT BROWNE,

of Tolethorpe, Rutland, a clergyman of high family, and related to the Lord Treasurer Burleigh. He was chaplain to the Duke of Norfolk. He joined the Puritan party, and advocated the reformation of the national church. He became a Separatist, and collected several small congregations on Separatist principles in the county of Norfolk. He was frequently cited in the ecclesiastical courts, and imprisoned for his attacks, both from the pulpit and the press, on the episcopal establishment. His high connexions saved him from perpetual imprisonment, or death. He fled to Holland, having Mr. Harrison, a schoolmaster, and several of his friends, as his companions in flight. He settled at Middleburg, where he formed a congregation, over which he and Mr. Harrison presided. Disagreeing with his people, he returned to England, and pursued an itinerating course, preaching the gospel and inveighing against the church. He took

Hosted by Google

up his abode at Northampton, and renounced his Separatist principles, and was rewarded for his tergiversation by the rectorship of Achurch in that county. His temper and habits in later years were of a dubious character, and for striking a constable in the execution of his duty, it is stated, he was committed to gaol, where he died in the 81st year of his age. He is reported to have said, "that he had been in thirty-two prisons, and in some of which he could not see his hand at noon day."

Different opinions have been formed concerning the sincerity of Browne. Mr. Fletcher, in his "History of Independency," thinks justice has not been done to his character. The common enemies of the Separation unite in the denunciation of the man, principally on the ground of his opposition to the established church. But even those who could have no sympathy with these opponents, and even adopted the general sentiments of Browne as their own, are equally united in his condemnation. Ainsworth, Johnson, Robinson, Brewster, and others, exhibit him in a most unfavourable light, and earnestly disclaim the appellation of Brownists.

Though it is to be feared without principle himself, he advocated the noblest principles of freedom both in conscience and worship. A doubtful expression or two have been quoted from his works by Mr. Underhill, in his Preface to "The Broadmead Records," which appear to justify the interference of the magistrates in religious affairs; but this is to make the man an offender for a word, and to put a construction on the expressions which seems at variance with his general arguments. Posterity is deeply indebted to him for his writings and labours. He collected and condensed the scattered rays of truth which had been gleaming through the darkness from the days of Wickliffe, and presented them in a glowing, genial light in his works. As the champion of religious liberty and the independence of the Church of Christ, all honour is due to his memory; would that he could be venerated for his character and life! He was an earnest and energetic man; an enthusiast and a genius. He pursued an erratic course, heedless of consequences. Bold and courageous by impulse, rather than by conviction, he became a coward

Hosted by Google

and quailed before his persecutors. The truth had no vital power in him. He acquired no martyr fame, but died ingloriously and disgraced in the prison, a warning and a beacon to coming generations.

It is surely with an ill grace that ecclesiastical writers reproach Nonconformity for the errors and inconsistencies of Browne, since, all scapegrace as he was, when he repudiated his separatism, he was welcomed into the church, was honoured with her preferment, and died in her fellowship.*

Mr. Harrison, the colleague of Browne, continued steadfast to the end of his course, and it is believed died at Middleburg.

THE EXILED CHURCH AT AMSTERDAM

now claims consideration. The date of its origin is unrecorded. It has been conjectured that 1593 or 1594 was the period of its formation; but probabilities are rather in favour of 1600, being about the time when FRANCIS JOHNSON and HENRY AINSWORTH became pastors and teachers in that city. Johnson, in his self-exile in 1593, went to Middleburg, became English preacher of the Puritan order, and there manifested his opposition to the Separatists as described by Mr. Waddington.† He could not have been banished from London after his visit to Barrowe and Greenwood, much earlier than 1600. He settled at Amsterdam, and found Ainsworth there, every way qualified to become his associate in ministerial labour. They jointly formed a church of such English Separatists, both exiles and others, as were residing in that city.

This church, consisting eventually of three hundred members, was exceedingly unhappy in its history; persons

* *Vide* Fuller's Church History, book ix. page 168; Biographia Britannica, sub. Non.; Neal's Hist. Pur. vol. i. page 301, 8vo. Ed. 1822; Brook's Lives of the Puritans, vol. ii. page 366; Hanb. Hist. Mem. vol. i. chap. ii.; Ben. Underhill's Preface to Broadmead Records, by Hanserd Knollys Society. But especially Joseph Fletcher's History of Independency, vol. ii. pages 97—130; vol. iii. pages 41—44.

† *Vide* Appendix, No. I. page 440, *supra*.

Hosted by Google

were united with it, whose characters became disreputable. Amsterdam was a common refuge for the persecuted and destitute. Hall speaks of it, contemptuously, as the common harbour and sink of all sectaries, and that Johnson's church was formed of heterogeneous parties, entertaining all kinds of opinions.

Beside the fact that Johnson and Ainsworth presided over it, little is known of the church except its contentions and divisions. Three secessions took place between its formation in 1600, and the year 1610, and on three different grounds.

The FIRST SECESSION happened in 1604, and was occasioned by the marriage of Mr. Johnson with the widow of a merchant, who, being accustomed to genteel life, dressed according to the style and fashion of the circle to which she belonged. Mr. Johnson's father, and his brother George, who were both members of the church, with others, were scandalized at this apparent conformity to the world, and sought her exclusion from the church. This led to disputes, parties, controversies, and finally to the excommunication of Mr. Johnson, sen., Mr. George Johnson, and several others, whose doubtful characters had come to light in the course of the disputes. *

It must have been a sore trial to Mr. Francis Johnson, as the pastor, in the name of the church to excommunicate his father and his brother: but the decision of the church was founded, doubtless, on just principles, and executed only after long delay, in the hope of reconciling the various parties. Mr. Ainsworth concurred in this excision, and justified it as the only means of securing the purity and peace of the church.

The SECOND SECESSION was the retirement of Rev. John Smyth and his adherents from the fellowship of the church. Mr. Smyth, an account of whom is given in former volumes,† was the pastor of the Separatist church in Lincolnshire, and came as an exile with many of his followers to Amsterdam, in the year 1606. They united themselves to Mr. Johnson's church, and remained in fellowship till

* *Vide* vol. ii. page 59, note.

† *Vide* vol. i. page 452, note; vol. iii. page 155, note; with pages 168, 169.

Hosted by Google

the unhappy differences on account of Mr. Smyth's change of opinion respecting evangelical doctrine and infant baptism led to their secession. This controversy must have arisen about the time of Mr. Robinson's arrival in 1608, as it would seem he retired to Leyden with his exiled company, in order that he might escape from the broils and contentions at Amsterdam. Mr. Smyth embraced the doctrinal views of Arminius respecting general redemption, and advocated the practice of believers' and adults' baptism, to the exclusion of infants from that ordinance. Hellwisse and Murton espoused his cause, and together with Mr. Smyth, left Mr. Johnson's church, and established another of their own in Amsterdam, which continued a few years, and then was broken up; the principal part of the people, it is supposed, returning to England. This movement of Mr. Smyth's occasioned a very general controversy, in which Johnson, Ainsworth, Clyfton and Robinson took an active part. The subjects of debate at that period are not yet settled. Calvinism and pædo-baptism, as well as their antagonist systems, still continue, and the controversy on both sides probably will not be terminated till the clearer light of heaven shall reveal the truth, and the respective parties, though holding these dissimilar views, shall be placed together in regions where no prejudice shall becloud the understanding, nor sin alienate the affections.

It is a rather singular fact, that zealous as were Mr. Smyth and his friends for believers' baptism, and earnest as were their opponents in behalf of infant baptism, the question of the mode of baptism was never mooted by either party. Immersion baptism does not appear to have been practised or pleaded for by either Smyth or Hellwisse, the alleged founders of the general Baptist denomination in England. Nothing appears in their controversial writings to warrant the supposition that they regarded immersion as the proper and only mode of administering that ordinance. Incidental allusions there are, in their own works and in the replies of Robinson, that the baptism which Mr. Smyth performed on himself must have been rather by affusion or pouring. Nor is this supposition improbable, from the fact that the Dutch Baptists, by whom they were surrounded, uniformly administered baptism by affusion.

Hosted by Google

It is asserted plainly and unequivocally by the Baptist historians, Crosby, Ivimey, and Adam Taylor, as also by Hanbury, Brook, and other writers among the Independents, that Smyth and others were immersed; but sufficient grounds for believing that such was the fact do not appear.

Before we proceed to the third division that took place, it seems desirable to give a brief account of the Reverend

HENRY AINSWORTH,

the colleague of Mr. Johnson, and teacher of the church. He was one of the most learned and accomplished of the Puritans. Of his early history nothing is known. Persecution drove him into exile about 1593. He probably accompanied Mr. Johnson and his friends to Holland, but remained himself at Amsterdam, while Mr. Johnson proceeded to Middleburg, as the minister of the English church in that town. He resolved on obtaining a livelihood in any way that Providence might direct. He became a porter in a bookseller's shop, where his taste and learning were soon discovered by his employer. It would be interesting to know whether he pursued his ministry while thus engaged in his secular calling, and was at this time collecting a congregation over which Mr. Johnson and himself should hereafter preside. But history is at fault on this point. Conjecture only can surmise. His position as teacher only, and not pastor in the church, would afford him the opportunity of engaging in other employments than those of the ministry. He pursued his studies, and composed many of his works, while united with Mr. Johnson in the ministration of the church. A man of large heart and loving spirit, as well as erudite and accomplished, he must have been a blessing to the people; his soul must have been riven with distress, when he witnessed the contentions among the brethren, and especially when the providence of God seemed to necessitate his own separation from the Christian society of his friends. His works are numerous. Controversial and Biblical Divinity compose the bulk of his treatises. His Annotations on the Pentateuch, the Psalms, and the Songs of Solomon, are generally known and deservedly esteemed. His treatise on the "Communion of Saints," is an admir-

Hosted by Google

able performance, and discovers his Christian spirit, and his intimate acquaintance with the sacred oracles.

It was the intention of the "Wycliffe Society," had it continued in existence, to have reprinted the principal devotional and practical works of Ainsworth. But the enterprise failing, no other parties have been induced to take the responsibility of publishing them.*

* *Vide* Brook's Love of the Puritans, vol. ii. page 306; Life of Ainsworth, prefixed to his "Communion of Saints," reprinted in Edinburgh, page 1789; Hanb. Hist. Memorials, vol. i. chaps. v., x., xvi., xviii.

Mr. Hanbury has directed the attention of the Editor to an interesting passage respecting Ainsworth, in Dr. Worthington's third letter to Mr. Hartlib, under date of June 11, 1660, included in a volume of "Miscellanies by Dr. John Worthington, some time Master of Jesus College, Cambridge," published in London, 1704:—

"There is another Author, whose remains are most worthy to be retrieved; I mean Mr. Ainsworth, whose excellent Annotations upon the Pentateuch, &c., sufficiently discover his great learning, and his most exact observation of the proper idioms of the holy text, with every iota and tittle of which he seems to be as much acquainted as any of the Masoreths of Tiberias. I have been told that there are these MSS. of his, viz. his Comment upon Hosea, Notes upon St. Matthew, and Notes upon the Epistle to the Hebrews; which latter he was the more prepared for, by reason of the former labours upon the Pentateuch; the Epistle to the Hebrews, being Moses unveiled. Mr. Cole, a bookseller at the Printing-press, in Cornhill, told me that he had once these MSS. in his keeping, and thought to have printed them; but that a kinsman, or a son, I do not so well remember, of Mr. Ainsworth's, at Amsterdam, and John Canne, could not well agree, either about the right of disposing the copy, or the price for the MSS. I have heard that Mr. Nye, or Mr. Jeffery, knew something of these MSS. If they could be recovered, so they be like the other printed works of the Author, it would be a good work indeed, and might be of singular use. Nay, if they be not throughout so completed as the Author intended, yet the whole is too good to be lost or embezzled. Perhaps you or Mr. Dury may be acquainted with the forementioned persons in England; or could by some understanding persons inquire of this business at Amsterdam. If the MSS. can be found, and may be purchased at a fit rate, there is no fear of being a loser; his other works have always sold well, and at a good price, and were bought by men of different persuasions from him: who did esteem him for his modesty and singular learning, and were much obliged to him for his skill in Jewish Antiquities, lighting their candle by his.

"This business, I think, is worthy of consideration."

These works do not appear to have been recovered or published.

Hosted by Google

On the removal of Mr. Robinson and his friends to Leyden, and shortly after the retirement of Mr. Smyth and his party to another part of Amsterdam, a difference of opinion arose between Mr. Johnson and Mr. Ainsworth, respecting the eldership and church power, and the true interpretation of Matt. xviii. 17, respecting excommunication. Mr. Johnson would restrict church power to the elders and officers, while Mr. Ainsworth, like his friend Robinson and all true Separatists, considered it as belonging to the whole society. The subject was discussed in the meetings of the church, parties were ranged on each side of the question, angry feeling arose, and the Johnsonians were disposed to exclude from fellowship all such as would not concur in the opinion of their pastor.

So hopeless did reconciliation appear among themselves, that Mr. Ainsworth desired the counsel and advice of the church at Leyden, and wished that a deputation might be sent. The majority, with Mr. Johnson, objected on various grounds to such a deputation; especially, as deeming themselves competent to settle their own differences.

Mr. Ainsworth, however, forwarded a letter to Leyden, signed by thirty of the members, intreating that Mr. Robinson and some messengers from the church might be sent to hear the statements of both parties, and to advise accordingly. The messengers came: various propositions were considered; one, that the respective parties should continue and worship together, the objectors having given in their protestation against the practice adopted by Mr. Johnson and his friends; another, that the parties objecting might continue to hear at Amsterdam, but should unite with the church at Leyden, that church adopting the principle contended for by Mr. Ainsworth; a third and middle course, by way of compromise, as proposed by Mr. Robinson, that all the business of the church should be first considered and resolved on by the pastors and elders privately, and then submitted to the church for confirmation only. None of these proposals gave satisfaction, especially as the Johnson party were urgent that the objectors should remove out of the city. The subject having been under discussion twelve months, and no hope of agreement ap-

Hosted by Google

pearing probable, Mr. Ainsworth and his adherents withdrew from the church, December 15th and 16th, 1610, and formed a separate society. The two congregations were severally designated by their common enemies, Franciscan Brownists, and Ainsworthian Brownists, according to the names of their respective leaders.*

The Rev. RICHARD CLYFTON, who had gone over to Holland, between the times that Smyth and Robinson severally exiled themselves, and who had been associated with both in the Separatist church in the Midland Countries, was at this period in connexion with the Amsterdam church. He took a decided part against Smyth in reference to his baptismal views, and wrote extensively and vigorously on the subject, in his "Plea for Infants and Elder people, concerning their Baptism," 1610.

He also coincided in Johnson's views respecting church power, and, on the retirement of Ainsworth, became associated with Johnson in the pastorship of the church.

"He was a grave and fatherly old man when he came first into Holland, having a great white beard: and pity it was that such a reverend old man should be forced to leave his country, and at those years to go into exile. But it was his lot, and he bore it patiently. Much good had he done in the country where he lived, and converted many to God by his faithful and painful ministry, both in preaching and catechising. Sound and orthodox he always was, and so continued to his end."†

Differences again arose in the church over which Johnson and himself presided, after the retirement of Mr. Ainsworth. Lawne and his party having been cut off for their impieties, they published their "Profane Schism of the Brownists," &c., and "Brownisme turned the Inside Outward," &c., and to which Mr. Clyfton replied in his "Advertisement concerning a Book lately published by Christopher

* The controversy between Johnson and Ainsworth is referred to by Neal, Brook, Hanbury, Fletcher, Young in his Chronicles of the Pilgrims, Stuart in his Life of Ainsworth, and more fully by Clyfton, in his "Advertisement," and Ainsworth, in his "Animadversion" on Clyfton's Advertisement.

† *Vide* Bradford Dialogues in Young's Chronicles, page 453.

Hosted by Google

Lawne and others," 1612. To which work, in consequence of its allusions to Ainsworth's proceedings, Mr. Ainsworth replied in his "Admonition."

He continued his ministerial service till death summoned him to rest.

Mr. Johnson removed after a few years with a portion of his church to Embden; he subsequently returned to Amsterdam, where he died.

Mr. Ainsworth continued in the pastorate over his flock, to which it is probable after the retirement of Johnson and death of Clyfton, the original church united itself, for 13 years; he died suddenly, in 1623, not without suspicion of having been poisoned through the coveteousness or malignity of a Jew in the city. He was succeeded by Mr. Canne, who went out from England in 1624, and jointly, as some suppose, with Mr. de Lescluse presided over the church: while others conjecture, that the church was again divided, and that they became pastors respectively of the churches thus formed into two Christian societies.*

The Church at Leyden.

Mr. Robinson removed with his friends to Leyden in 1609, and formed their church, as soon as they could assemble for worship, in that celebrated city. The numbers were at first comparatively small, but were gradually augmented by exiles from England and other parts of the United Provinces, till it was nearly as large as the mother church at Amsterdam, in its most palmy state. The pastor, with the elder, Mr. Brewster, and the church, appeared to live in peace and harmony. They were frequently consulted by the church at Amsterdam, on occasion of the differences between Mr. Johnson and Mr. Ainsworth.

A letter from the church at Amsterdam to that at Leyden, on the subject of the differences, with Mr. Robinson's reply in behalf of his church, and the rejoinder, are preserved in Clyfton's "Advertisement," and are reprinted in the following pages:—

* *Vide* reference to Mr. de Lescluse, page 127, *supra*.

Hosted by Google

"*Letter from the Church at Amsterdam to that of Leyden.*

"Beloved, touching the things that have now lately been spoken of between the two churches, yours and ours, about the dismission of such, on either part, as are not content with protestation, peaceably to walk in their difference of judgment, we have occasion to entreat the continuance of your consideration yet further thereabout. 1st, Because yourselves signified it came suddenly upon your church: and if either you or we minded otherwise by the Word of God, we should after signify it: wherefore we expect to hear, whether you continue likeminded as heretofore. 2nd, Because there is with us a new motion of our walking together thus, by bearing one with another, so as for peace, to permit of a double practice among us, that those that are minded either way should keep a like course together, as we would do if we were asunder, according as the persons shall be that have the causes. Which way, if it may be found warrantable by the Word of God, and peaceable unto and among ourselves, we hope all that love peace in holiness will accord. These things as we are to consider of, so pray we you to do the like with us and for us, that we may do that which is most to God's glory and our mutual comfort. Thus, &c.

"*Amsterdam, November* 5, *old style*, 1610."

"*Reply of the Church at Leyden to that of Amsterdam.*

"Touching the agreement, brethren, between the churches for our mutual peace and the relief of the consciences of our brethren, we did and do repute the same as full and absolute on both sides, except either some better course can be thought on, or this manifested to be evil, and that it be reversed, with the mutual consent of both churches. And for this last motion about a double practice, as we are glad of the great and godly desire to continue together, in it manifested, so we do not see, how it can stand either with our peace or itself: but that it will not only nourish, but even necessarily beget endless contentions, when men diversly minded shall have business in the church. If therefore it would please the Lord so far to enlarge your hearts on both sides, brethren, as that

Hosted by Google

this middle way be held, namely, that the matter of offence might first be brought for order, preparation, and prevention of unnecessary trouble, unto the elders, as the church governors (though it is like we for our parts shall not so practise in this particular); and after, if things be not there ended, to the church of elders and brethren, there to be judged on some ordinary known day ordinarily, the admonition being carried according to the alteration practised and agreed upon by all parts, till it shall please the God of wisdom and Father of lights, by the further consideration and parties discussing of things, either in word or writing, to manifest otherwise for our joint accord: it would surely make much to the glory of God and the stopping of their mouths, which are so wide opened upon us in respect of our daily dissipations, and should be to us matter of great rejoicing, whose souls do long after peace and abhor the contrary; and that thus, walking in peace and holiness, we might all beg at God's hands the healing and pardon of all our infirmities, and so be ready to heal and forgive the infirmities of one another in love. And with this prayer unto God for you and for ourselves, we re-salute you in the Lord Jesus.

"*Leyden, November* 14, 1610."

"*Reply of the Church of Amsterdam to that of Leyden.*

"Your letter, brethren, we received and read publicly. Concerning which we have occasion to signify some things unto you thereabout. And first touching the agreement treated of between us, that for such of us as will not come thither to remain with you, but purpose still to live here, in this city, apart from us: albeit there be some that could be content, notwithstanding, so to dismiss them, yet there are others of us, that having more considered of it, think it not lawful to have any hand in consenting thereunto, and mean therefore to reverse our former agreement unto it; besides that divers of us say, they never consented hereunto. And, further, some of us also begin to think that it will be found unlawful to keep spiritual communion with them in such estate, however we may still retain with them civil society.

Hosted by Google

"The reasons minded, why not so to dismiss them, nor to have spiritual fellowship with them in such estate and walking are these:—

"1. Because we cannot find warrant for it in the Word of God.

"2. Because they refuse, disobey, and speak evil of the truth and way of God.

"3. Because they refuse to continue and keep communion with us, though they may be suffered to walk with us in peace, with protestation in their difference of judgment.

"4. Because some of them profess they will not deal in causes (as may fall out between us) by way of protestation, neither when they are with us, nor when they are from us.

"5. Because they go not from one church and pastor to another, so to live and remain: but purpose, when they have come and joined unto you, then presently to return and live here in this town apart from us.

"6. Because by such walking of theirs, great reproach will come upon us all, with much dishonour to God and hinderance to the truth, what in them lieth.

"7. Because we think there should alway be somewhat in such cases used, as whereby the Lord may work upon their consciences, to consider their estate, and to repent and yield to the truth and way of God, which they have hitherto refused and oppugned, &c.

"Thus we thought to acquaint you with these things and the reasons thereabout. Which yet are so minded of us, as if either among ourselves or by others, we shall hereafter better discern what is according to the will of God herein, we shall, God willing, be ready so to receive and walk.

"As touching the double practice, misliked by you, although indeed it may seem somewhat strange and difficult, yet for the present, some of us could like better of it, than of a parting: but the brethren differing from us will not admit of it. Neither will they yield to that middle course propounded in your letter. Yet have we left it, with the former things, to their further consideration. And howsoever it pleaseth the Lord to dispose of us, our trust is, that he will work all in the end to the furtherance of his

Hosted by Google

truth and peace of his church in Christ Jesus. To whose gracious protection and guidance we commend you, &c.

"*Amsterdam, November* 19, 1610."*

Some misapprehension having arisen as to the course pursued and advice given, by Mr. Robinson and the messengers sent from Leyden to Amsterdam, they, at the request of Mr. Ainsworth, published the following document:—

"*The Testimony of the Elders of the Church at Leyden.*

"Though we much rather desired to have been mediators of the peace of our brethren, than witnesses of their strife, yet may we not, because that which we desired could not be effected by us, withdraw from that, which both may, and ought by us to be done. We, therefore, being desired thereunto by Mr. Ainsworth, and occasioned by that which both Mr. Johnson and he have written, and taking the evils which have befallen others, as matter both of humbling and warning to ourselves, do signify what we know and have found in our dealings thereabout.

"And First. Our special calling to intermeddle in this uncomfortable business, was a letter sent unto us by some thirty of the brethren there; in which, mentioning in the beginning of it, their long and grievous controversy, they signified how they had oft desired of the church to request our help therein, and that the elders would no way approve thereof, but would only permit our coming, either of ourselves, or at their request. Wherein they also certified us, how some of them had charged the exposition of these words, "Tell the Church," Matt. xviii. 17, Tell the Elders, with some other particulars thereupon depending, to be error; and so were to prove their charge; and therefore earnestly requested us to help in that great business; that the truth might be maintained, and not by their weakness injured, and the innocent condemned; and that we would help the Lord against the mighty, &c.

"And the reason why they thus earnestly requested our

* "An Advertisement concerning a Book lately published by Christopher Lawne and others, against the exiled Church at Amsterdam, by Richard Clyfton, teacher of the same Church." 1612.

Hosted by Google

help was, because Mr. Ainsworth was so sparing in opposing of Mr. Johnson's new doctrine (though always misliking it), as they scarce knew how he was minded in the things; so loth was he to come to any professed and public opposition with him, whom he rather hoped to pacify by moderation, than by opposition to stop in his intended course. Besides, he was careful not to give any encouragement to the too violent oppositions of some brethren, though minded as they were, in the things themselves.

"This their letter, and earnest request in it, notwithstanding, we went not, but wrote to the church, and showed them what the substance of the letter was, desiring by them to be informed how things stood with them, and signifying withal, our unwillingness to interpose, but upon a due and necessary calling, and that, also as much as might be under the conditions of best hope of good issue.

"They, as before, denied to approve of our coming, and would only permit it, and that under the terms of jealousy and advantage, as appears by that which themselves have published; and did oft and earnestly require of us a copy of the letter before mentioned, with the names of the persons subscribed unto it; which though we judged, and still do, an hard and extreme imposition in itself, considering they themselves had permitted them to send unto us, and knew from us whereabout they wrote, and had not laid it upon them to show them their letter before they sent it; yet had we given way to their desires herein, had it not been for one phrase in the end of the letter, which being borrowed from Deborah's speech against Sisera, Judges v. 23, and applied as it was, might give offence, and minister occasion of further strife, which phrase also we reproved in the writers of the letter, and they acknowledged amiss; professing, notwithstanding, they had no evil meaning in it, but only a desire to provoke us the more effectually to supply their inability against those with whom they had to deal. Now, for our withholding the copy of the letter, though since that time, for their importunity we sent it them, as also for our purpose of coming unto them, and the ends thereof, we will here insert what we wrote unto them in two several letters thereabout.

"For the former thus:—'If the letter whereof you desire

Hosted by Google

a copy, might further your common peace, or procure good to any, we should easily answer your desire; but if, on the contrary, there were the least evil in it, we should hold it our duties to deal with the parties offending ourselves, and not to discover their sin.' And loth would we be either to minister matter of further scanning amongst you, or that any register of unkindness should come unto you from our hands. And the fear of this was in truth the only cause why we refused to send this letter, as they required. Wherein if we failed, as we see no cause so to think, yet was it the error of our love, and great desire of their peace.

"About our coming we thus wrote:—'Our purpose therefore is, according to the request of the brethren which have moved us, and our duty, to send or come unto you; not to oppose any person, or to maintain any charge of error, but by all other brotherly means to help forward your holy peace (if so the Lord's will be); which how precious it is unto us, we hope to manifest to the consciences of all men; than which we know nothing in this world we have more cause to endeavour, both with God and yourselves. Of which our coming we pray you to accept, and to appoint us some such time, as seems to you most convenient. Where also we shall satisfy you to the utmost, both touching the letter, and other particulars in all equity, yea, so far as we can without apparent sin.'

"These things, notwithstanding they would not approve, but only permit of our coming, as men use to permit of that which is evil, and which indeed they could not hinder. And so we came unto them; first of ourselves, and afterwards at the request of Mr. Ainsworth, and them with him, being sent by the church, whereof we are: and so enforcing ourselves upon them, for the delivering of the church's message, did reprove what we judged evil in them, and that, we confess, with some vehemency. And in that regard it was, that (upon the motion made by Mr. Johnson for the free dismission of such members with them, unto us, as could not there walk with peace of conscience, there lying no other cause against them, which should also be mutually performed on our part) we signified, as he writeth, that 'we little thought they had been so inclinable to peace, and that if we had so thought, we would have carried our-

Hosted by Google

selves otherwise towards them, than we did.' And good cause had we so to speak. For neither is the same carriage to be used towards men prosecuting their purposes and persuasions with all violence and extremity, and towards them which manifest Christian moderation in the same; neither had we before, or have we since found the like peaceable inclination in them, to that which they then manifested. Which how great grief it hath been unto us, and how it hath even wounded our very hearts, He only knoweth which seeth the sorrows of the hearts of his servants, and putteth their tears in his bottle.

"But to pass by these things, and to proceed. The motion made by Mr. Johnson for a peaceable dismission, was by the church there received with general assent, unto which the church also at Leyden condescended; and so sent back the officers for the further ratification of it, and for some other purposes tending to the establishing of peace amongst them. Whereupon it was also the second time by them confirmed, always indeed with submission to the Word of God, as was meet; and that if either they or we minded otherwise, we should so signify. Which notwithstanding they did not; but reversed the agreement of themselves, without acquainting us with the change of their mind or reasons thereof.

"Afterwards, indeed, they gave us knowledge of their purpose, as appears in their former letter by themselves published, desiring the continuance of our consideration about it, as if the thing which was fully agreed upon, as is aforesaid, and that oftener than once, had been only in consideration; and in their second letter, as also appeareth, they gave us certain reasons of their dislike.

"Unto which reasons of theirs we gave no answer (as they both write) before their parting. And the causes were: 1. For that they continued not long together after they came to our hands. 2. We had upon occasion of the motion made for a double practice, propounded another course, both more fit and warrantable, as we thought, than that, for the bringing of things first to the elders, as appears in our letter. Unto which course, though we do not bind our brethren, yet may we safely say, so far as we remember, that there never came complaint of sin to the

Hosted by Google

church since we were officers, but we took knowledge of it before, either by mutual consent on both sides, or at least, by the party accused; with whose Christian modesty and wisdom we think it well sorteth, that being condemned by two or three brethren, he should not trouble the church, or hazard a public rebuke upon himself, without counselling with them who are set over him, and who either are, or should be best able to advise him.

"Thirdly, and which was the chief cause, we were without all hope of doing good, when they once misliked the motion which made it. Whilst they liked it, we had hope, though it were with hard measure to the other, and so did further it, to the utmost of our power; but when they laid it down, we knew all our labour would be lost in endeavouring their second liking of it.

"Lastly, where Mr. Johnson affirmeth, that at the first treating of the matter, we conceived that those by them dismissed should remain at Leyden with us, notwithstanding their want of means of living, it may well be, as he saith, though we well remember it not. And therein all men may see how we were even overcarried with a vehement desire of peace with them, and amongst themselves, and how far we were from being partial towards them with whom we agreed in the things in controversy. Yea, the truth is, we were boldest with them, both because we would prevent all jealousy in the other, and preserve in them all the interest we could for the common peace; and also because we were well assured of Mr. Ainsworth's great moderation, upon whom the rest did much depend.

But howsoever we conceived at the first, it is certain that both they and we conceived otherwise in the agreement; and, therefore, when one amongst them made exception, that we should not dismiss them back, which came unto us, to live a distinct congregation in the same city with them, it was presently answered, both by Mr. Johnson and Mr. Studley, that, that concerned not them, but that they would leave it unto us; though that appeared afterwards to be the only thing for which they broke off their purpose and promise. And here the work of God's providence is to be observed, that they who would have no peace with their brethren, abiding in the same city with

Hosted by Google

them, are about to leave it themselves, and to settle their abode elsewhere. Which thing, that it might well come to pass in short time, they were by us put in mind of beforehand, if God gave them not again to re-unite, which by a peaceable parting, might have been furthered. Which how much better had it been they had admitted of, all things considered, than through extreme straitness in themselves (not to meddle with the main cause) thus to have made their brethren their adversaries, and themselves, yea, and us all, a by-word to the whole world.

"JOHN ROBINSON.
"WILLIAM BREWSTER."*

Mr. Johnson having written "An Answer touching the Division," &c. containing an animadversion on a passage in Mr. Robinson's reply to Bernard,† respecting church authority, which was so strongly debated at that time, Mr. Ainsworth called Mr. Robinson's special attention to it, and desired him to answer it.

"*Mr. Robinson's Answer.*

"Because Mr. Johnson hath in his 'Answer touching the Division,'‡ expressly taxed my book against Mr. Bernard, I think it meet to insert a brief answer to his exceptions, as followeth. He there writeth thus—

"'Whereas we had learned and professed that Christ was the only king and lord of his church, and had left unto it among men, but a ministerial government, and that all the multitude of the members, the saints ought to obey, and submit to the eldership in every church. Now we have lately been taught, that the people as kings have power one over another, and that the saints being kings are superior to their officers, because the order of kings is the highest order in the church, &c. Also, that the church may in relation to the officers being servants therein, be called a lord, &c.;' and for this he quoteth my book, adding that I 'advance the people one above another as kings, entitle them with kingly and lordly power in the outward policy and affairs of the church, by which as the

* *Vide* Ainsworth's Animadversion to Mr. Richard Clyfton, &c. pages 133—136. † *Vide* vol. ii. pages 228, 236. ‡ Page 27.

Hosted by Google

prelates on the one hand, so the people on the other hand become idols.'

"Acknowledging the former and latter part of that, he saith we have formerly professed, I except against the middle clause of the sentence, in sundry respects. First, in that he draws the question, which is about the power of Christ in the church, common to all, to the government and guidance of the church in the use of this power, which is peculiar to the officers; which may also more clearly appear to him that reads the places he quotes in the margin, wherein he concludeth, though more covertly, a double untruth; the one, that, because the government of the officers is only ministerial and not kingly, therefore there is no kingly power left unto the church, or communicated with the saints for the suppressing of sin: the other that, because the officers are the only governors of the church, and so by us acknowledged, therefore they only have the power of Christ. And thus he would closely wrap up the church's power in the officers' government, and not be seen in it. For the clearing then of the difference between government and power, it must be considered, that by government may either be understood the whole dispensation of Christ's kingly office, whether inward or outward, whether by himself or by others; and so this power we speak of is comprehended under it as a part thereof. Or, it is taken more strictly for the guidance and ordering of the church in her public affairs, and the administration and execution of them; and so it appertaineth to the officers, and is clean another thing than the power in question. For the proving of this difference, the apostle Paul writes to the whole Church of Corinth to excommunicate the incestuous man, by the power of the Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. v. 4, 5. This power he would have the whole church to use, but yet would not have the whole church to become governors, nor to take upon them government, but the officers only; by which it appeareth that government and power are diverse things. I do further add, what if the whole eldership should be charged by two or three witnesses, with heresy, blasphemy, or the like crime, and complaint thereof be made to the church? Mr. Johnson, in this his Answer,* confesseth

* Page 17.

Hosted by Google

that the church (he would be asked whether women and children or no) may depose all her officers jointly, persisting in transgression, though in the same place he mince the matter too small, in saying they may depose, or refuse them, and separate from them; and again, refuse them. Whereas to depose, and to separate from, or refuse, are very diverse; for first to separate from the eldership requires no power, but liberty, and therefore may be done by one man or woman, upon just occasion: so cannot deposition be upon any occasion, but by the church; for which deposition of all the officers of the kingdom of Christ, the church, a man would think the power of Christ were needful, and that by it such a judgment should pass out. Besides, the church in deposing her officers, doth not separate herself from them (to speak properly), but them from her. Well, to take the least liberty he will give the people. If they may separate from all their officers, persisting in transgression, then they must receive the complaint of sin, which is orderly brought, and by sufficient witnesses, against them, and must examine and judge the matter. Now, if it argue power to receive a complaint of sin against one brother, and to examine and judge it, and so to censure him by excommunication, if there be cause; doth it not also argue power to receive a complaint of sin against all the officers, to examine and judge it, and so to censure them, as there is cause, by deposition? But what now shall the elders do accounting themselves innocent, and wrongfully accused, whilst the church thus examineth things, and judgeth of them? Shall they surcease their government, and fail the church in so great a need? and would Mr. Johnson so practise? or are they not now to do a special work of their government, not only in preserving order, but in directing, instructing, and guiding the church by the Word of God in her whole proceedings? By which it appeareth, that judging of sin, and power to suppress it, is one thing; and government for the right use and ordering of the same, another thing. The officers which are judged do govern, and the body of the church which judgeth them, is governed by them. We may yet further see this difference even in the lordly governments of this world, and that both in peace and war.

Hosted by Google

"In the civil government of our own land, than the which none in the world, in the right use of it, is more excellent when a malefactor comes to be arraigned at the assizes or sessions, he is to be tried by his country (a competent company, where all cannot possibly pass upon him), which they call the jury, whose power and sentence is of such force, as that the lord chief justice himself, and all the bench with him, cannot proceed against it, either for the quitting or condemning of the person; and yet the bench governeth the whole action, and the jury is by them, according to law, to be governed. I wish the elders with whom we have to do would allow the body of the church the like liberty at their sitting, as they call it, that is, at their spiritual sessions; or rather, that they would better consider that they are as ministers to stand and serve, and not as lords, to sit and judge. Numb. xvi. 9; 2 Chron. xxxv. 3; 2 Cor. iv. 5.

"Lastly, when an army is sent against the king's and their own enemies, the government is in the captains and officers, but so is not all the power for fighting with, and subduing of their, and their king's, enemies. Neither is all the power of the church, which is an army with banners, in the officers alone, for the subduing of Christ's and their enemies, sin and Satan, though the government be. Thus may the difference plainly be seen betwixt power and government; in the opening of which I have been the longer,* because, 1. I think it a main ground of our controversy. 2. Our opposites do much insult over us, as speaking contradictions, when we yield the officers all the government, and yet deny them all the power. 3. The weaker sort are much misled, and carried away through want of discerning this difference.

"I proceed to a second thing, and affirm that Christ hath not left to the church among men only a ministerial power (which he confusedly calleth government), as he saith. He hath left the Word of God, and gospel in the church, which is lively, and mighty in operation, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, &c., Heb. iv. 12; 2 Cor. x. 4, 5, ruling, and reigning in and over the very hearts and lives of men; binding their consciences, and

* *Vide* vol. ii. Justif. of Separation, pages 141—144.

Hosted by Google

bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. I know men can only minister this power, whether in doctrine or discipline, as they speak; but it is one thing to say the power is only ministerial, and another thing, that men can only minister it; for men may be the ministers only of that power which is kingly and lordly in itself, and so over men, as this is. So the saints can only minister their kingly power, by participation of Christ's anointing, as one special grace they have received; of which more hereafter.

"Now in laying down the things wherewith he chargeth me, he alters my words, misinterprets my meaning, and conceals that which I have written; and he read in my book for the explaining of the same.

"And first he saith, I have taught that the people are as kings one over another; that I advance them one over another as kings, and above their governors, entitling them with kingly and lordly power (that is government, as he explains himself) in the outward policy of the church.

"I do not in these places, or any other, advance the people one over another, much less over their officers, in the outward policy of the church, that is, as he explains his meaning, in the government of it. I do everywhere profess the officers the governors, and the people the governed by them.

"Neither do I anywhere affirm that the people are kings, or as kings one over another, as he chargeth me. I say in one place,* that the saints are not kings for themselves alone, but for their brethren also; as they are not priests only for themselves, but for their brethren. And in another place,† that every one of the faithful is a king, not only to himself, but to every other member, as he is a priest, and a prophet, &c. Here is a king one for another, and one to another, but not one over another, much less over the officers, for government, in the external policy of the church. The plain and simple truth then, is, whatsoever men either mistake of ignorance, or suggest of an evil mind, that we do not call the saints kings in respect of outward order and government, as though they were to order and govern the church in her public affairs, which is

* *Vide* vol. ii. page 237. † Page 140.

Hosted by Google

the work of the officers; but as they are partakers of Christ's kingly anointing, by his Spirit, common to the head and the members, and so kings by participation, and endowed with kingly power for the conquering and subduing of the power of sin and Satan, not only in themselves, but in their brethren also, by the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, which they are to minister unto them, as all other graces in their order.

"And this meaning being held, it may safely be taught that they are over one another, that is, to watch one over another, and so as kings to conquer their spiritual enemies, one in another mutually. But I will rather insist upon mine own words, "for or to one another," as being most fit to show that communion of the saints in this grace, as in the rest, which he also in all equity should have done. And thus I will prove this royal communion of the saints. And for them that make themselves merry herewith, let them suffer me to speak, and when I have spoken, let them mock on. Job xxi. 3.

"And first, it must be observed, that the place and scriptures which Mr. Johnson notes in our Confession, to prove Christ the only king of his church, prove him as well, and that truly, to be the only priest and prophet of his church. And if notwithstanding his sole prophecy and priesthood peculiar to him, as the head, the saints may be prophets and priests as members, by communication, they may also be kings by communication, notwithstanding his peculiar imperial power. And so the Scriptures testify that he hath made us kings and priests unto God, even his Father, and so our Father. Rev. i. 6; and v. 10.

"But it will be answered, that Christ hath made us kings to resist, subdue, and conquer our spiritual enemies, sin, Satan, this world, and our worldly lusts, by the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, and the work of the Spirit, in and by the same. Eph. vi. 11, 17. I grant it, and thereupon conclude, that since God's people are also by the same weapons and means to resist and subdue the power of sin in their brethren, they are also kings in the same respect unto them.

"The saints are Christians, Acts xi. 26; Rom. xiv. 4, 5; 1 Cor. xii. 27, and that for, and in respect one of another,

Hosted by Google

as members under Christ, one of another, and therefore kings. For to be a Christian for another, is nothing else but by participation of Christ's anointing, to be a priest, prophet, and king for another. Add unto this, that whatsoever grace any member of the body hath received, it is for the use and edification of the rest, and so in order to be administered by him as a good disposer of the grace of God. 1 Pet. iv. 10. And must this royal grace then, which the saints have received, find no time nor place for the dispensation of it unto others?

"When a brother comes to subdue, and make conquest of some spiritual enemy, or sin, appearing in his brother, either privately or publicly, in his place and order, he doth this as a fellow-member and Christian, and so by one of his three states and endowments, of priest, prophet, or king (for he hath no office wherein he administereth); but by neither of the two former, therefore by the latter, and as a king, and so made by Christ.

"Lastly, the people are, by Mr. Johnson's own grant, to choose their officers, as also upon just occasion to depose them. And this, as the former, they do, not as priests or prophets, and therefore by their kingly endowment from and under Christ.

"And thus much to prove the saints in their communion (as priests to offer up the prayers one of another, and prophets to instruct one another, so also) partakers of the kingly dignity of Christ, as his members, for the suppressing and conquering of sin, appearing one in another, in that order which Christ hath left. And where do I in all this, as is imputed to me, advance the people, as others do the prelates, and make them idols? Do I give them power to prescribe and appoint other forms of God's worship, offices of ministry, canons, ceremonies, or holy days, than Christ hath prescribed and appointed? to bind the conscience, by urging subscription *ex animo*, to their own inventions, or to loose conscience, by dispensations to sin, as of pluralities, non-residences, and the like? or that one man should set up and pull down ministers, and excommunicate and absolve both ministers and people by his sole authority? If another man should thus have charged Mr. Johnson, when he maintained the same liberty of the

Hosted by Google

brethren, if not greater, which I now do, though it may be not under the same terms, he would have pronounced it blasphemy in him. But passing by his terms of provocation and reproach, I come to another exception; which is, that I make the order of saints superior unto the order of officers; to wit, in itself, as I there explain my meaning, and not in respect of government, as he traduceth me. I know that he which guideth, ordereth, and directeth another, is in that his art and work, superior unto him that is so guided, ordered, and directed. So is the pilot in guiding the ship, superior and above all the passengers in it, though the king and his council. So is the physician, in ordering the king's body; as is also the meanest guide in leading and directing him, and his army royal, in unknown places. So are the officers superior to the church in their art, or work of government, which is the opening and applying of the Scriptures to the use and direction of the church; but as this is done by them, in an order of service, and not of lordship, so I judge, and call them inferior. And so in my book, I make them equal in their persons, as saints, superior in the word they minister, and in the place of God; not so in their order of servants, wherein they minister, but inferior.*

"My reasons there brought to prove mine affirmation, because he here meddles not with, I also forbear in this place to confirm; only a few words of one of them, upon which the next and last exception dependeth. Which is, that the order of church officers is inferior to the order of the saints, because their order is an order of service, 2 Chron. xxxv. 3; Numb. xvi. 9; Ezek. xliv. 11; 2 Cor. iv. 5, and servants unto the saints of the church. I know kings may be said to serve their people, and so to become their servants; but this is only in respect of their love towards them, and care for them; but not in respect of their order, which is a lordship and kingship, by which they reign over their people, as their servants and subjects. The like may be said of Christ himself, as that he served his disciples, and became as a servant, &c. And for that it must be considered, that as in the things wherein he did thus serve, and become as a servant, he did in his love make himself

* *Vide* vol. ii., Justification, &c., pages 228—230.

Hosted by Google

inferior to his disciples, and preferred them before himself; as in giving his life a ransom for many, Matt. xx. 28; in being as he that serveth at the table whereat his disciples sat, Luke xxii. 27, in which respect he expressly teacheth them to be greater than himself; and in washing their feet as they sat at supper, John xiii. 4, 5; so was not his order an order of service in itself, but of headship and kingship, which if our church officers could prove their order to be, we would then acknowledge it indeed superior to the order of saints. But their order being merely an order of servants, methinks common sense should serve to judge the same inferior to the order of the church, whose servants under Christ they are.

"I add in my book,* that the officers being by their order servants, the church may, in that relation, be called a lord; not for the governing of them in the outward policy and affairs in the church, as he injuriously collects, but as they are for the church's use and service, which he conceals, though I expressly so note in the same place; as also that the same church servants are church governors; the government of the church being a mere service. And for the thing. If the officers be to be called servants to the church, what is the church to be called to the officers? A servant is a relative, and must have a correlative; and I would know by what name he would call it, if not by the name of lord, master, mistress, or the like. And if he deny this, he takes away from men the use of common reason and understanding. Let the servants know, yea, though stewards, as are the church officers, and so betrusted with the government in a special manner, that the wife of their lord and master is a degree above them, and so to be acknowledged by them, lest they not only wrong her, but provoke him to wrath.

"Lastly, because he imputes new doctrine to me, I will note down the doctrine of some few others, both more ancient and more worthy of respect than myself.

"Musculus, in his Commentaries upon 1 Cor. iii. 22—24, 'Let no man glory in men, for all are yours,' &c., saith thus: 'Is it not absurd that the greater, to wit, the church, should glory in the less,† to wit, the officers; the lord or master in

* Vol. ii. page 236. † Major in minore.

Hosted by Google

the servant?'* And in this sense, saith he further, 'The perverseness of the false apostles is noted, who when they were servants of the church, did make of a mistress,† or dame, a servant, and of servants, lords. And again, the foolishness of the church is taxed, who when they were lords ‡ of their ministers, gloried in their servants.'

"Bullinger, upon the same place, ver. 21, saith thus: 'So great is the dignity of them that believe, that God hath subjected all things unto them. It is therefore great folly if the lord § of things subject himself to the things,' &c.

"Pareus, Professor, of Heidelberg, in his Commentaries upon the same scripture, reproving the church's glorying in Paul, Cephas, &c., and quoting 2 Cor. iv. 5, 'We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants, for Jesus sake,' saith thus: 'It is not meet that the lord should glory in his servant; we are your servants, therefore,' &c.‖

"All these, and many more call the church expressly a lord, in the very same relation with me; and yet I suppose, never man challenged them for making an idol of it, or setting up a lordly government; neither would Mr. Johnson me, had he not been immoderately jealous for the officers' dignity.

"JOHN ROBINSON." ¶

The Leyden church continued in unbroken fellowship, till the embarkation of the Pilgrim Fathers in 1620. The numbers continued to diminish by successive emigrations and removals. The few members who survived the death of Mr. Robinson in 1625, found their way across the Atlantic, and thus the church at Leyden became extinct, only to arise in greater vigour and power on the distant shores of the new-found world.

The Church Principles and Regulations of the Exiled Churches.

As a defined and invariable form of church order is not exhibited or enjoined in the New Testament, it would be interesting to learn how Congregationalism first deve-

* Dominus. † Domina. ‡ Domini. § Dominus.
‖ Non convenit Dominum gloriari in servo suo, &c.
¶ *Vide* Ainsworth's Animadversion, pages 111—117.

Hosted by Google

loped itself in the religious services of the exiles and pilgrims. Happily we are at no loss on this subject. Clyfton, Bradford, Robinson, and Prince have furnished information respecting the principles and forms of worship adopted by the churches at Amsterdam, at Leyden, and by the first Congregational church in Plymouth, New England.

1. *Amsterdam.*

The venerable Mr. Clyfton, colleague of Mr. Johnson in the pastorship of the church at Amsterdam, thus describes the order of their worship :—

"1. Prayer and giving of thanks by the pastor or teacher.

"2. The Scriptures are read, two or three chapters, as time serves, with a brief explanation of their meaning.

"3. The pastor or teacher then takes some passage of Scripture, and expounds and enforces it.

"4. The sacraments are administered.

"5. Some of the Psalms of David are sung by the whole congregation, both before and after the exercise of the Word.

"6. Collection is then made, as each one is able, for the support of the officers and the poor."*

To this order of their service may be appended Bradford's Enumeration of Church Officers, as given in his Dialogues.†

"Truly there were in them (the churches at Amsterdam and Leyden) many worthy men; and if you had seen them in their beauty and order, as we have done, you would have been much affected therewith, we dare say. At Amsterdam, before their division and breach, they were about three hundred communicants; and they had for their pastor and teacher those two eminent men before named (Johnson and Ainsworth); and, in our time, four grave men for ruling elders, and three able and godly men for deacons, and one ancient widow for a deaconness, who did them service many years, though she was sixty years of age when she was chosen. She honoured her place, and was an ornament to the congregation. She usually sat in a

* An Advertisement concerning a Book, &c., by Richard Clyfton. 1612. 4to. Amsterdam.

† Young's Chronicles, page 455.

Hosted by Google

convenient place in the congregation, with a little birchen rod in her hand, and kept little children in great awe from disturbing the congregation. She did frequently visit the sick and weak, and especially women; and, as there was need, called out maids and young women to watch and do them other helps, as their necessities did require; and if they were poor, she would gather relief for them of those that were able, or acquaint the deacons: and she was obeyed as a mother in Israel, and an officer of Christ."

This distinction of officers—pastors, teachers, ruling elders, deacons, and deaconesses—doubtless obtained, as far as practicable, in the other churches of the exiles; and is in exact accordance with Robinson's ideal of a complete church, as described in his Catechism.*

2. *Leyden.*

It has been seen† "that Mr. Robinson, and a considerable portion of his companions from Scrooby, removed, after a few months' residence, from Amsterdam to Leyden, and organized themselves into a distinct society, over which he was ordained as their pastor.‡ The constitution and officers of the church would be according to the Amsterdam model, so far as circumstances would allow.

A passage from the "Dialogues" will illustrate the order of the Leyden church:—

"And for the church at Leyden, they (the members) were sometimes not much fewer in number, nor at all inferior in able men, though they had not so many officers as the other; for they had but one ruling elder with their pastor, a man well-approved (Mr. Brewster) and of great integrity; also they had three able men for deacons. And that which was a crown to them, they lived together in love and peace all their days, without any considerable differences or any disturbance, that grew thereby, but such as was easily healed in love; and so they continued until, with mutual consent, they removed into New England. And what their condition hath been since, some of you that are of their children do see and can tell. Many

* *Vide* Question 14 in Catechism, page 429, *supra*.
† *Vide* Appendix ii., page 466, *supra*.
‡ *Vide* vol. i., page 463.

Hosted by Google

worthy and able men there were in both places (Amsterdam and Leyden), who lived and died in obscurity in respect of the world, as private Christians, yet were they precious in the eyes of the Lord, and also in the eyes of such as knew them; whose virtues we wish such of you as are their children, do follow and imitate."*

Further light is thrown on the history of the Leyden worship and order by Robinson and Brewster's Letters to Sir John Wolstenholme, on the subject of their proposed emigration to America.

Sir John was one of the leading members of the council of the Virginia Company, and was anxious to know the religious opinions and practices of the community over whom Robinson and Brewster presided, and wherein their practices differed from those of the reformed churches in Holland, France, &c. Insinuations had been thrown out affecting their orthodoxy and loyalty, which Sir John was desirous of disproving, if possible, by statements from the ministers of the Leyden emigrants.

"To Sir John Wolstenholme,—

"Right Worshipful,—With due acknowledgment of our thankfulness for your singular care and pains in the business of Virginia, for our and (we hope) the common good, we do remember our humble duties unto you, and have sent, as is desired, a further explanation of our judgments on the three points specified by some of His Majesty's honourable privy council. And although it be grievous unto us, that such unjust insinuations are made against us, yet we are most glad of the occasion of making our just purgation unto the so honourable personages. The Declarations we have sent enclosed: the one more brief and general, which we think the fitter to be presented; the other something more large, and in which we express some small accidental differences, which, if it seem good to you and other of your worship's friends, you may send instead of the former. Our prayer unto God is, that your worship may see the fruit of your worthy endeavours, which on our part we shall not fail to further by all good means. And so praying you would with all conveniency that may be,

* Young's Chronicles, page 456.

Hosted by Google

give us knowledge of the success of the business with His Majesty's Privy Council, and accordingly what your further pleasure is, either for our direction or furtherance in the same: so we rest.

"Your worship's in all duty,

"JOHN ROBINSON,

"WILLIAM BREWSTER.

"*Leyden, January* 27, 1617. *Old style.*"

"*Declaration, No.* 1.

"Touching the ecclesiastical ministry, namely of pastors for teaching, elders for ruling, and deacons for distributing the church's contribution, as also for the two sacraments, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, we do wholly and in all points agree with the French Reformed Churches, according to their Public Confession of Faith: though some small differences.

The Oath of Supremacy we shall willingly take, if it be required of us, if that convenient satisfaction be not given by our taking the Oath of Allegiance.

"JOHN ROBINSON,

"WILLIAM BREWSTER."

"*Declaration, No.* 2.

"Touching the ecclesiastical ministry, namely of pastors for teaching, elders for ruling, and deacons for distributing the church's contribution, as also for the two sacraments, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, we agree in all things with the French Reformed Churches, according to their Public Confession of Faith: though some small differences be to be found in our practices, not at all in the substance of the things, but only in some accidental circumstances: as,

"1. Their ministers do pray with their heads covered: we uncovered.

"2. We choose none for governing elders, but such as are able to teach: which ability they do not require.

"3. Their elders and deacons are annual, or at the most for two or three years: ours perpetual.

"4. Our elders do administer their office in admonitions and excommunications, for public scandal, publicly and

Hosted by Google

before the congregation: theirs, more privately, and in their consistories.

"5. We do administer baptism only to such infants as whereof the one parent, at the least, is of some church, which some of their churches do not observe: although in it our practice accords with their Public Confession, and the judgment of the most learned amongst them.

"Other differences, worthy mentioning, we know none.

"Subscribed,

"JOHN ROBINSON,

"WILLIAM BREWSTER."*

3. *Plymouth.*

The church at Leyden was the mother-church of the Pilgrims at Plymouth, New England. During the life of Mr. Robinson, and the continuance of the church at Leyden, the two societies were essentially one. The Pilgrims did not establish a new organization: they went out according to mutual agreement as an "absolute church of themselves" already constituted, being only a branch of the church still remaining in Holland. So identical were the churches, that it was agreed that such members of the already existing church as should go to America or return, should be "reputed as members, without farther dismission or testimonial," and therefore entitled at once to take their places at the sacramental board, and to exercise their rights in the meetings of the church.

Originally one in the members of which the churches were composed, they continued to be essentially one in religious sentiment, and ecclesiastical practices.

Dr. Cheever, in his interesting work, entitled "The Pilgrim Fathers," has given a summary of the constitutional principles of this first church of Christ, in New England, as detailed more at large by Mr. Prince in his "New England Chronology."

A similar representation of the church order and worship of the Pilgrim Church, is given by Mr. Punchard, in his "History of Congregationalism," from about A.D. 250 to 1616.

* *Vide* Bradford's History of the Plymouth Colony, in Young's Chronicles, pages 63—65.

Hosted by Google

The following is Dr. Cheever's enumeration of the church principles and regulations of the Plymouth church, and which are substantially those of the original churches at Leyden and Amsterdam :—

"1. That no particular church ought to consist of more members than can conveniently watch over one another, and usually meet and worship in one congregation.

"2. That every particular church of Christ is only to consist of such as appear to believe in and obey him.

"3. That any competent number of such, when their consciences oblige them, have a right to embody into a church for their mutual edification.

"4. That this embodying is by some certain contract or covenant, either expressed or implied, though it ought to be by the former.

"5. That being embodied, they have a right of choosing all their officers.

"6. That the officers appointed by Christ for this embodied church, are, in some respects, of three sorts; in others, but two: namely,

"(1.) Pastors, or teaching elders, who have the power both of overseeing, teaching, administering the sacraments, and ruling too, and being chiefly to give themselves to studying, teaching, and the spiritual care of the flock, are therefore to be maintained.

"Mere ruling elders, who are to help the pastors in overseeing and ruling, that their offices be not temporary, as among the Dutch and French Churches, but continual; and being also qualified in some degree to teach, they are to teach only occasionally, through necessity, or in their pastor's absence, or illness; but being not to give themselves to study or teaching, they have no need of maintenance.

"That the elders of both sorts form the presbytery of overseers and rulers, which should be in every particular church; and are in Scripture called, sometimes presbyters, or elders; sometimes bishops, or overseers; and sometimes rulers.

"(2.) Deacons, who are to take care of the poor, and of the church's treasure; to distribute for the support of the pastor, the supply of the needy, the propagation of religion, and to minister at the Lord's table, &c.

Hosted by Google

"7. That these officers, being chosen and ordained, have no lordly, arbitrary, or imposing power, but can only rule and minister with the consent of the brethren.

"8. That no churches, or church officers whatever, have any power over any church or officers, to control or impose upon them; but are equal in their rights and privileges, and ought to be independent in the exercise and enjoyment of them.

"9. As to church administrations, they held that baptism is a seal of the covenant of grace, and should be dispensed only to visible believers, with their unadult children; and this in primitive purity, as in the times of Christ and his apostles, without the sign of the cross, or any other invented ceremony. And that the church or its officers have no authority to inflict any penalties of a temporal nature; excommunication being wholly spiritual, in a rejection of the scandalous from the communion of the church.

"10. And lastly, as for holy days. They were very strict for the observation of the Lord's-day; in a pious memory of the incarnation, birth, death, resurrection, ascension, and benefits of Christ; as also solemn fastings and thanksgiving, as the state of providence requires. But all other times not prescribed in Scripture, they utterly relinquished. And, as in general, they could not conceive anything a part of Christ's religion, which he has not required, they therefore renounced all human right of inventing, and much less of imposing it on others."

"These," says Mr. Prince, "were the main principles of that scriptural and religious liberty, for which this people suffered in England, fled to Holland, traversed the ocean, and sought a dangerous retreat in these remote and savage deserts of North America; that here they might fully enjoy them, and leave them to their last posterity."*

* *Vide* Prince's New England Chronology, part iv., sect. 1, pages 91—93. Cheever's Pilgrim Fathers, pages 160—164. Punchard's History of Congregationalism, pages 361—363.

FINIS.

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google

CHRONOLOGICAL INDEX

OF MR. ROBINSON'S WORKS.

	Date.	Vol.	Page
1. An Answer to a Censorious Epistle	1609	iii.	395
2. A Justification of Separation from the Church of England	1610	ii.	1
3. Letters on Christian Fellowship . . .	1611	iii.	81
4. On Religious Communion	1614	iii.	91
5. The People's Plea for the Exercise of Prophecy	1618	iii.	281
6. A Just and Necessary Apology . . .	1619	iii.	1
7. A Letter to the Congregational Church in London	1624	iii.	378
8. An Appeal on Truth's Behalf . . .	1624	iii.	387
9. On the Lawfulness of Hearing, &c. . . .	1624	iii.	335
10. A Defence of the Doctrine propounded at the Synod of Dort	1624	i.	261
11. Essays on Observations Divine and Moral .	1624	i.	1
12. Catechism: An Appendix to Rev. W. Perkins'. Earliest Edition found	1642	iii.	421

Hosted by Google

INDEX OF SUBJECTS.

Absalom, sin of, illustrative of God's decrees, i. 278—280.
Actions, God the author of, but not of sinfulness in, i. 293: sinful, suffered, but not decreed by God, 276; lawful, become sinful by their misapplication, 295: two kinds, personal and ecclesiastical, iii. 104.
Acts of Parliament against Nonconformists enumerated, iii. 451.
Adam in innocence, the grace of perseverance gives an advantage over, to the godly, i. 29: fall and sin of, iii. 242: connexion between, and God's decrees, i. 274, 275: mysterious beyond human comprehension, proof of, 275: left to himself, God's decree, 280: grace would have preserved him, 284: the object of his creation, good only, 284: immutable in holiness, could he have been made? 285—288: sin of, illustrated by David's adultery, Joab's murder, 293: did infants sin in? 403; possessed freedom of will after his fall, iii. 245: not a private person, 246: left to himself, as all are who sin against God, 256.
Adultery, a base sin, i. 241.
Afflictions, their cause, i. 139: reasons why sent, 140: their connexion with the Gospel dispensation, 140: of Christians, character of, 141, 142: specific cases, caution in applying Scripture to, required, 142: sometimes the greatest happiness, 143, 144.
Age, characterized by ignorance, contemptible, i. 253.
Agapemone near Taunton, identical with Familists, i. 390, note.
Ainsworth, Henry, biographical notice of, iii. 462.
Allen, Rev. W., D.D., on Descendants of Robinson, i. lxxi.
Ames, Dr., general biographical sketch of, iii. 84.
Amsterdam, the Congregational Church at, notice of, iii. 339, 459: its divisions, 460: controversy at, respecting Baptism, peculiar, 461: letter of, to the church at Leyden, 467: another, 468: forms of conducting public worship at, 485.
Anger, when wrong, i. 225: identical with madness, except as it respects duration, 226: branded by God, characteristic of a fool, 227: preservatives against, 227, 228.
Antiquity, true, *i. e.* the Word of God, to be followed, ii. 34.

Hosted by Google

Appearance, that by which men judge, i. 183 : a rule by which men should act, 184 : of evil, to be avoided, 184 : without reality, blameworthy, 185.
Apostacy in general, i. 389 : Hymeneus (1 Tim. i. 19, and 2 Tim. ii. 17), Antichrist, (1 John ii. 26, &c.), illustrations of, i. 391.
Apostles, peculiar officers, ii. 145 : commission extraordinary, 155 : did not constitute the church, 200 : not ordained by laying on of hands, 438.
Apostolic succession from Rome ; the Church of England, holding its ministry from Rome, inconsistent in separating from, ii. 413, 424, 430 : makes the minister lord of the church, 432 : consequences and absurdities of, 433 : overthrows itself, 433 : who ordains the pope? 434 : Timothy and Titus did not succeed the apostles, 164.
Arundel, Rev. John, Pastor of Church at Southwark, iii. 453.
Assemblies, parish, not of God, iii. 126.
Atheists, various kinds of, i. 68 : atheism and idolatry, 68 : the characters that adopt atheism, 68.
Authority, province of, i. 53 : human, of little value unless it be that of inspired men, 56, 57 : that of God, how set aside, 57 : civil, to be obeyed and how, ii. 17 : of the magistrate, predominant in the Church of England, 39 : to preach, administer sacraments, censures, discussed, 129—131 : to choose deacons and elders, 153 : supposed mischief of its being solely vested in the church, 211—216 : opinions of reformers and others respecting, viz. of Paphuntius, Tertullian, Cyprian, Austin, Jerome, Demetrius, Peter Martyr, Bucer, Bastingius, Beza, Hooper, Fox, Cartwright and Jacob, 218—221 : popular confusion alleged to be incident to, 222.

Baptism in general, i. 415 : of infants, Scripture authority for, 416 ; iii. 211, 216 : reasons why not more plainly and expressly spoken of, 216 : outward and inward ; instances of the outward baptism, conferred without the inward, i. 417 : proof against infant baptism refuted, 419 : proof for, adduced, 420 : connexion of repentance with, 421 : children "clean," a proof of, 422 : into Moses, 426 : of households, 427 : Christ commanding infants to be brought to him, 428 : infant circumcision, 430 : Abrahamic covenant, 431 : two seeds of Abraham, 432 : new and better covenant, Abraham the father of the faithful, 440 : lawful and unlawful administration of, 445 : church membership not by, 447 : churches not constituted by, 449 : instances of, before the first Christian church was constituted, 450 : extreme views of, rebuked, 451 : to be administered by official persons, 452 : John's extraordinary, 454 : the apostolic commission not authorising non-official persons to administer, 455 : an official act, 457 : duty of the church when without officers, in respect to, 461—471 : the design of, ii. 28 : and the ministry, difference between, 415—418 : effect of, 458 : administration of, to whom, iii. 17—19 :

Hosted by Google

that outwardly received in England lawfully retained, 164: not the mode or means of union with Christ, 166: not admission to the church, 167: self-baptism performed by Mr. Smyth at Amsterdam, deemed essential to the formation of a church and the exercise of social prayer, 168, 169: a church not constituted by, 180: re-baptism required on re-admission into the church, 180: has two parts, the sign and the thing signified, 183: the outward valid where the inward is not, 184: is in the place of circumcision, 187: Romish, 192: household, 222: the Dutch practice by affusion, i. 452: first English Baptists in Holland did not practise immersion, iii. 461.

Barrowe, Henry. [*See* notice of, iii. 439.]

Believers, all transgressions persevered in, separate from, iii. 353.

Bishops, spoken of in Scripture as over particular churches, and not otherwise, 416: over many flocks, a device of Antichrist, 138, 139: prelatical, usurp all the rights and liberties Christ gave his church, 140: work of, according to the New Testament, excluded by the parochial system, 142: how regarded by the Scotch, 418.

Books, the best counsellors, because sincere and impartial, i. 96: the will of God in, the advantage of, i. 107—109: service-book, an idol, iii. 132.

Browne, Rev. Robert. [*See* notice of, iii. 457.]

Catechism by Rev. J. Robinson, iii. 421: notice of by Editor, 342: titles of, 344.

Canne, John. [*See* notice of, iii. 449.]

Children, education of, i. 242: oneness of with their parents contemplated in God's covenant, 243: in charge of mothers in earlier, of fathers in riper years, 244: surrounded by dangers, 244: diseases of body, so those of mind hereditary, 245: love to, how shown, 246: discipline of, its kind, 246, 247: how to secure the obedience of, 247: disposition and spirit of must be discovered by parents, 248: partial affection of parents for some of, wrong, 249: those who honour parents, promises to, 250.

Church, two or three constitute, ii. 131—139, 439: its members must be holy, iii. 66, 126: officers of, what qualifies for, ii. 132, 146, 148: duty of, ii. 147: a company of faithful covenanting people, form, eight reasons for, 132—136: all ministrations vested in, 137—139: popular constitution of, 139—142: ministers of, interpreters of God's laws, cannot receive civil titles, 143: eldership of, its character, 144: testimony of Scripture concerning, 145—160: church matters may originate with private members, 148—150: ministers of, their duty, 155: "Tell the church," meaning of, 179: censures of, 184: order of, 186: its power of binding and loosing, 190, 201: perfect rule of discipline in, Matt. xviii.: discipline of, consistent with the power of the magistrate, 193: governors of, 195: word "church" used figuratively, 216: its duty to its officers, 224: clergy not above the condition of

Hosted by Google

common Christians in, 229: its power and their exercise not identical, 235: its members have a right to judge in church matters, 235: relationship of officers and members in, 237: separation from, on what ground justified, 259: the materials of a true church, 284, 292: the question, May it include the ungodly? examined, 321—323: false analogies and reasonings on this subject, 325—327: admission of unconverted persons into, a fatal error, 486: visible form of, 327: properties and privileges of, 358: power of excommunication in, to whom it belongs, 367: reasons for, in a true church, 368: an ordinance, like preaching the Gospel, 369: rights and powers of, enumerated, 448—450: in a false, conversion possible, 458: pre-requisites for the formation of, 473—480: no visible church, except particular congregations, 338: acts of, the brethren join equally with the officers in, 449: should not consist of more than can conveniently meet together in one place, iii. 13: universal, or catholic, true meaning of, 16: cannot be called visible, 14: discipline of, conducted not by the elders but by the body of the faithful, 37—43: not separated from the world, involves a profane error, 129: false and true, 173, 176: in what senses it may be false, 348: Christ did not gather and form a church, 487: but the apostles did, ii. 487: Dutch and French reformed, formed on the principle of separation, iii. 128.

Church of England, a compound of error and truth, ii. 5, 6: impurity and errors of, forbidding communion with, 12: reasons why many ministers remain in, 14: testimony of various writers adduced as to her popish character, 81: bishops of, antichristian, gift of the Holy Ghost by, in ordination, 91, 92: an idol, ii. 100: its constituents compared with those of Corinth, 355: popish ceremonies in, 360: nourishes thousands in dangerous errors, 471: built up by Antichristianism, 474: a popish device and inconsistent with itself, 480: overthrown by Eph. iv. 11, 12: its prelacy and priesthood usurping the office of Christ, iii. 172: history of, during the reign of Mary and Elizabeth, proves it to be, not a scriptural church, ii. 489: additions to, impossible, as the whole nation on principle belongs to it, 491: public service of, not according to Scripture, 496—499.

Christ offered to all, meaning of, i. 340—349: care of his sheep, 382: kingdom of, spiritual, ii. 40.

Christians should seek and enjoy church-fellowship, iii. 152.

Communion, union with Christ essential to, ii. 266: what the apostle forbids, 345: private, iii. 104: public, 126.

Conscience, its province, i. 193: mistakes connected with, to be corrected by the Word of God, 194: the law of God written on, 338: its voice to be attended to, subject to God's teaching, ii. 19.

Contempt hard to be borne, i. 169: injurious effects of, 170: manifested towards others when feeble in body or mind, is shown against God, 170: affected, unworthy, 171.

Hosted by Google

Counsel, definition of, i. 95: motives for asking, 97.
Covetousness (and prodigality), nature and results of, i. 132: pleas for, 134.
Credit and good name the result of virtue, i. 165.
Crosses, right use of, i. 142.

Days, holy, not, except the Lord's-day, of divine appointment, iii. 43: Lord's-day to be sanctified, 46—54.
Deacons, office of, false in the English Establishment, ii. 364.
Death, in what it consists, i. 254: alters the condition of men eternally, i. 155: understood by no creature but by man, i. 256: divine appointment, 256: teaches moderation, time of uncertain; teaches watchfulness; of saints, precious, i. 256—258: of Christ, for whom, 329—334: the consequence of sin, 408.
Decree, divine connexion with the death of Christ, i. 276.
Deeds, good, the principle on which they should be performed, i. 19—21.
Discretion, its importance, i. 87.
Discipline, in the church to be conducted by ministers only, fallacious, ii. 165.
Divorce, when lawful, i. 24.

Ecclesiastical causes and civil matters, difference between, ii. 31.
Effectual calling, i. 116: its privileges, 116, 117: principle of, illustrated in secular life, i. 118.
Election, definition of, by the Synod of Dort, i. 310: definition of, on the Arminian hypothesis, incorrect, 317—328.
Elders, duty of, ii. 178: office of, in what it consists, iii. 31: ought not to relinquish their appointment, 29, 30: are not to discharge their functions in consistory, but in the church, proof of, 34—37.
Eloquence, in what it consists, i. 104.
Enmity, of former friends, the greatest, i. 164.
Envy described, i. 172—174.
Esau and Jacob, (hated and loved,) God's decree connected with, i. 360—364.
Establishment, errors in, ii. 272—276.
Excommunication, meaning of in Scripture, ii. 190: power of, where vested, 195: exercised by the church, not by officers, as practised in the English Establishment; twelve reasons for, 238—255: separation of the lepers and the unclean, not excommunication, 197.

Faith defined, i. 59: its origin and nature, 61: power of, known to the devil, 61, 62: God's Word its foundation, 62: shield of, necessary, 63.
Falsehood, sinful, and from the devil, i. 75.
Falling away, meaning of, i. 367, 368: cautions and exhortations respecting, 369.
Familists, a mystic religious sect, i. 390. [*See* Agapemone.]

Hosted by Google

Fathers of the first age of the church after Christ, preferable to all others, ii. 55.
Fear, an Essay on, i. 221.
Fellowship, Christian, nature and grounds of, iii. 85—89: reasons for, with persons belonging to a corrupt church, 111: not with them in their church capacity, but as individual Christians, 116: former may not be done, 117: the Jews forbidden all communion with the uncircumcised, not a valid ground for Christians, 118: rightly understood, does not confirm those who belong to a corrupt church in that relationship, 119: but only with the godly, 121: objects of prayer identical, a ground for, 122: the faith of Rome different, not a justifying faith, hence no fellowship with, 122: the danger of confusion, not a sufficient bar to, 123.
Flattery, an Essay on, i. 178.
Forgiveness of injuries, its importance, i. 148, 149.
Free-will, an Essay on, i. 393.
Friendship, how to show, i. 163: influence of wealth and prosperity on, 163.

Gifts, spiritual, imparted by Christ to the church, not to its officers only, ii. 167.
God, knowledge of, derived from his works and Word, i. 1, 2: iii. 237: notions of entertained by curious wits, imperfect, i. 2: essence of, known to himself alone, 3: the means and process by which the knowledge of is gained, 3: love of, 4: himself the chief object of, ground of to other beings, 4: the ways in which he reveals himself, 4: promises of, 8: his goodness, sustaining the natural powers by which the creature sins against him, no reflection on, 16: works of, demand praise, 16, 17: the source of every good, the creature that of evil, 18, 19: the worship of, and man's happiness inseparable, 32: laws of, to be interpreted in the largest sense, 48: his dominion regards all things, small and great, 280: revealed and secret will, difference between, how discovered, 281: will of, simple in its nature, exercising itself diversely, three degrees of, 289; foreknowledge and truthfulness of, 298, 301: counsel of, its meaning, 301, 302: concurrence of, in human actions, 302—306: general permission of, difference between suffering and sending evil, 306—309; instructions of (John chap. xii. 39, 40 discussed) rejected, 311—314: purposes of, apparently frustrated, 334—338: his hating and loving, meaning of, 355: will of, resisted, 360: decrees of, and sin, iii. 238: love of, and man's recovery, 235: love in the execution of his vengeance, iii. 254: fatherhood of, and that of man, not identical, 257.
Godliness, its importance in friendship, i. 161.
Goodness, created, discussed, i. 17—24.
Gospel, what it does, i. 52: preached by the clergy, therefore they are true ministers—this argument of churchmen examined, ii. 397.
Government of the church, in what it consists, iii. 134.

Hosted by Google

Grace, falling from, how spoken of in Scripture, i. 29, 30.
Greenwood, Rev. J., notice of, and his persecution, iii. 439.

Hall's (Bishop) letter to Messrs. Smyth and Robinson on Separation, iii. 401: answer to, 405.
Hanbury, B. [*See* List of Authors.]
Happiness, consisting in the knowledge of God, i. 1.
Health, the greatest temporal blessing, how to preserve, 136.
Heart, the source of all evil, 99: Can man change his own? i. 397.
Heathen, every obstinate offender to be treated by the church as such, ii. 354.
Heresy and schism, i. 70.
Hierarchy of the English Establishment forming an insuperable objection to Nonconformists, i. 69, 71.
Holland, the Nonconformist exiles and their churches in, (notice by the Editor), iii. 455.
Hope defined, i. 59.
House of Lords, examines six members of the church at Southwark, iii. 450.
Humility described, i. 228, 229: advantages of, 229: leads to God, 230; danger of becoming excessive, 231; a form of pride, 231.
Humphrys, Dr., pastor of the church at Southwark, iii. 453.
Hypocrisy, meaning of the term, i. 206: leads to atheism, 207: base and foolish, 208: when and by whom falsely ascribed to the godly, 208: odious, yet advantages of, 209.

Idolatry, what constitutes, i. 69.
Ignorance, not always blameworthy, i. 80.
Immersion, not practised by Dutch Baptists, nor by first English Baptists in Holland, i. 452; iii. 461.
Independency, principles of government where vested according to, ii. 7: no novelty, 42: charges brought against refuted, 46: not enjoying the approbation of foreign churches alleged, 49: ministers of, hated by the prelates, 50: confession of, printed, translated into Latin, 50: the opposition of learned and godly divines no valid argument against, 51; the judgment of God alleged against, the charge refuted, 56: contentions in, no argument against the principle, 60: crimes committed by members of, no valid argument against, 63: ill success of, no argument, 65: all true doctrines and ordinances of the Church of England, enjoyed by, 69: evils of the system, 73.
Independents, peace and truth contended for by, ii. 82.
Infants, connection of with Adam, i. 404: how accounted innocent by Christ, 407: Have they any need of Christ? 412: of Israel within the covenant, iii. 199: included in the promises, 201: born in sin, 252.
Inferences from passages of Scripture to be received, ii. 33.
Injuries, differences in, i. 145: to be pitied, 146: odious in four classes of persons, 146: received with indignation, 147: when wise not to heed, 148: not to be requited, 149.

Hosted by Google

Inspiration of the Scriptures, principle of, i. 44: internal and external, 45.
Intentions, good, how rewarded by God, 110, 111.

Jacob, Henry [*see* List of Authors], emigrated to America, iii. 447.
Johnson, Francis, his remarkable conversion to Nonconformist principles, iii. 440, 460.
Junius, Francis [*see* List of Authors], biographical sketch of, iii. 101.
Justification, Paul and James on, reconciled, 329.

Killinghall, pastor of the church at Southwark, iii. 453.
Kindness bestowed, not a ground for glorying; received, not a ground for shame, i. 23.
Kingdom of Christ, who are the subjects of, ii. 102: who are not, 105: of heaven, its keys, to whom committed, 154: keys, meaning of, 156, 227.
Kings and Queens, nurses, not parents, of the church, ii. 488.
Knowledge essential to faith, i. 77: for what end it should be sought, 78: the means by which it should be obtained, 78: prosperity and greatness unfavourable to, 79.

Labour, the original appointment of, i. 113, 114: despised by the proud, 114: lawful and profitable, a blessing, 115: for eternal things cannot be too great, 115.
Lactantius. [*See* List of Authors.]
Lathrop, J., and Lamb, pastors of the church at Southwark, &c., iii. 449, 453.
Law and gospel, confusion of, lamentable, i. 51.
Law, canon, the only authority for discipline in the Church of England, but contrary to the teaching of the Church of England, ii. 21: character of canons, iii. 418.
Learning, the use of, for understanding Scripture, i. 54.
Leyden, notice of congregational church at, iii. 339, 340, 381—385, 388, 466, 467: testimony of the elders of, 470: becomes extinct, 484: order of, 486, 488.
Liberality and its contraries, i. 130: how rightly exercised, true nature of, 131.
Liberty, of Christ, must be maintained, ii. 24: of churches infringed by patrons, 459.
Life, shortness of, a wise providence, i. 255: eternal, ordained to, 366.
Liturgy, written, reasons for rejecting, iii. 19—22: reasons for not using what is called the "Lord's Prayer" as such, 22—25: the direction of Moses to the priests, no authority for, 25: reading prayer contrary to what the term implies, 26: incompatible with ministerial gifts, 27: with the reason of the thing, 28.
Love of God, its power, influence, and extent, i. 5, 6: in God and in the creature different, 5: what is, 60: power of, 64: of the brethren, a proof of to God, 64: fulfilling the law, 65: perfect, would render law unnecessary, 65: generates love, 66: regu-

Hosted by Google

lated by faith and hope, 66: essential to the proper observance of the Lord's Supper, ii. 265: difference of, and goodwill and friendship, i. 160.
Luciferians, a religious sect in the fourth century, ii. 44.
Luther. [*See* List of Authors.]
Lying, the fearful consequence of the habit, i. 76.

Magistrates cannot act in matters of faith, what they may do, i. 41—43: identical on church principles with church officers, fallacious, ii. 173: hold a civil office only, iii. 63: magistracy and oaths, iii. 275.
Man, in what kind of good deeds he should glory, i. 19: a religious creature, 31: spiritual or carnal, 314.
Mankind, original state of, 403.
Marriage, ordained of God, design of, how viewed by some heathen poets, how by Popery, i. 236, 237: guided by reason, 237: how contracted improperly, 238: what qualifies for, 239: ought to be performed by magistrates, not by pastors, ii. 466; iii. 45, 46.
Marryat, Dr. Zephaniah, pastor of the church at Southwark, iii. 453.
Martyrs for nonconformity, iii. 443, 444.
Mayflower and Speedwell vessels sail. [*See* Memoir of Mr. Robinson.]
Means, defined, i. 3: feeble, used by God for his own glory, 112: only moral allowed by Christ for the advancement of his kingdom, ii. 307—309.
Medicines, skill required in administering of, i. 138, 139.
Men, fickleness of, apparent in changing their religion, i. 37: ought to find the truth, 39.
Mind, affections of, i. 217: the body not the seat of, kinds of, i. 218: power of, 219: strong affections, not always right to manifest, 220: how to guide, 221.
Ministers, what constitutes true, ii. 371: ability to preach, not a necessary qualification for, in the Establishment, ii. 372: made in, before election and before probation, ii. 382: choice of by the people, 386: denied by churchmen, this examined, 391—395: reasons for the people choosing, 396: of the Establishment shown not to be true ministers, 410—413: those of the Establisment, succeed the priests, ii. 415: Can a church alone make? 423: churches, how to be supplied with, 431.
Ministry of the gospel, the seal of, ii. 9—11: dignities of, 233: qualifications for, 385: success of, in the Establishment, not an argument for its validity, ii. 400—407: Which precedes, the church the ministry, or the ministry the church? the question examined, ii. 418—423.
Ministerial labour, the experience of Mr. Nichols in his "Plea of the Innocent," ii. 288.
Modesty, the effects of, i. 233: manifest, in men of understanding, 234: the want of, odious, 235: prayer for, becoming, 235.
Monastic life, opposed to God's purpose as shown in man's social character, 158.

Hosted by Google

Name, great, rather than good, sought by many, i. 165: good, to be obtained by well-doing, 167: worthless, when not approved of by God, 168.
Necessity and compulsion, difference between, 290: acts of men, an illustration of, 291.
Nonconformists object to the mode of entrance to the ministerial office in the Establishment, ii. 390: their trials from four sources, iii. 5—7: their defence, 7: their calumnies brought against, 7, 8: their views of the Apocrypha and reasons for rejecting, 9, 10: their agreements with the reformed churches of Holland, 10—12: the self-expatriation of, offensive to their opponents, 97; opposed from political motives, 98: opponents of, many worthless characters, 99: retained only persons of piety in their fellowship, 100: their strictness, a ground of offence, 101: partake in social prayer with others, 105: their objections to the English Establishment, 106: while objecting to the order of the Establishment, admit the piety of thousands of its members, 107: churches of, charged by Mr. Hellwisse to be false, because not re-baptized, 175: charged with the vices of the city of Amsterdam, 417.
Nonconformity, grounds of enumerated, iii. 73.

Oaths and lots, affinity between, described, i. 201: strongest confirmation of truth, 202: used to inferiors, by those who are cowardly to superiors, 224, 225.
Offences, given or taken, to be avoided, by walking in "love and by faith," i. 187: readiness to take, shows weakness or pride, 188: meaning of in Matt. xviii., ii. 187.
Officers, church, are not officers except in their own individual churches, ii. 418: servants of the church, 435: chosen by the multitude; this apostolic and just, iii. 135: election of, and ordination of, vested in the church, ii. 445.
Orders and ordinances, piety does not consist in, iii. 109: importance of, 110: sale of, (and institutions), constituting the charge of trafficking in the souls of men, 141.
Ordination, Is Romish valid? ii. 378: examination for, in the Establishment, not warranted by Scripture, 385: conferred only by ministers, when orderly and regular, 430: What is? 436: laying on of hands observed in, 439: scriptural, examined, 441: power of in each separate church, 440, 445: admitted by Perkins, by Melancthon, 446: by Peter Martyr, Zanchy, Tilenus, Sadeel, 447.
Owen, Jonathan. [*See* notice of, iii. 452.]

Paganism and Antichristianism, difference between, ii. 467.
Papacy, priests of, usurp the rights of the people and those of each other, *one* at last, those of all, ii. 390.
Patience, its nature and importance, i. 150, 151: necessity of, 152: when most difficult to exercise, 153.

Hosted by Google

Patricians, and Paternians, account of, ii. 282.
Patronage unscriptural, ii. 395.
Peace, what comprehended under, i. 154 : the importance of shown by God, 155 : not always destroyed by dissenting from others, 155, 156.
Persecution, the heathen, Papists and Protestants addicted to while pleading for toleration to themselves, i. 40 : laws in Judea, no warrant for persecution, 41 : fleeing from, iii. 155 : the practice of Jacob, Moses, David, Jeremiah and Christ, in fleeing from, considered, iii. 156, 157 : reasons against fleeing from, weighed, 159—164 : the persecuted more likely to have the truth, i. 560.
Perseverance essential to salvation, i. 27 : means of, 28.
Persons ungodly, cannot be members of the true church, ii. 339.
Pharaoh's heart hardened, discussed, i. 357—359.
Pilgrims, embarkation and debarkation of. [*See* Memoir of Mr. Robinson.]
Plymouth, New England, church at, constitution of, iii. 489—491.
Poverty, why sent, i. 125.
Prayer, what is ; influence of, not upon God but upon ourselves, i. 196 : advantages of, 197 : the character of, 198 : necessary to prosecute worldly undertakings, 199 : comfort of, advantages of, 200 : forms of, no warrant for in Scripture, ii. 499—503 : reasons against the use of the forms in the English Establishment, ii. 504.
Preaching, an official act, i. 459 : the principal work of the ministry, but incompatible with prelacy, ii. 384 : lay, vindicated, iii. 288 : lay, not forbidden by the power of binding and loosing sins, 289 : not by the commission of prophets and apostles, 291 : inspiration of the first teachers and the imposition of hands, no valid argument against, 292 : nor the extraordinary gift in the apostolic churches, 296 : nor the gift of tongues, 301 : edification, a ground for, 303 : not forbidden by the spiritual gifts in ; 1 Cor. xiv. 304 : the special revelation mentioned, not a valid argument, 306 : the forbidding of Eldad and Medad, no argument against, 308 : Scripture sustains the practice, 309—335.
Precepts, affirmative and negative, how to be understood, i. 50.
Predestination, preface of Turretin on, i. 269, 270 : meaning of the term, 271 : defence of, 272 : articles of the Synod of Dort on, 272, 273 : punishment of sin, how connected with, 283 : conditions of, 386.
Prelacy, how upheld, ii. 45 : prayer extolled by, for the purpose of setting aside preaching, 78 : subverts the order of Christ, iii. 141 : not a plant, planted by God, must therefore be plucked up, 143 : a worldly system, 144 : unscriptural, therefore unlawful for the people of God to be connected with, 146 : a support of the papal system, 147.
Prelates send the ministers, not the church, in the Establishment, ii. 380 : how regarded by Nonconformists, iii. 417.
Presbytery, in each church approved, iii. 28, 468.
Pride, displayed in the selection of associates, i. 162 : the proud

Hosted by Google

abominable to God, 232: shown most generally in apparel, 232: remedies against, 233.
Priestly office of Christ, corrupted in the English Establishment, ii. 276.
Priests, Romish, and English clergy, have the same office, 376.
Profession of religion, does not make the matter of the church, ii. 281, 283.
Prophesying (or preaching), ii. 246: nature of discussed, 248—251: meaning of, iii. 324: women restrained from, no valid argument against, iii. 326: duty of proved, 331: the exercise of, to whom committed, 55—58.

Redemption, universal, iii. 258: meaning of the word, 260—262.
Reformation effected by Elizabeth, imperfect, not the same in character with that effected by Hezekiah, Josiah, Nehemiah, in the Jewish church, ii. 309—318, 492: not voluntary, 318.
Regeneration, iii. 250, 265: means necessary, 268.
Religion, differences and controversies respecting, i. 31: controversies sometimes necessary, always dangerous, 36: rites of, some essential, and some a matter of order, 32, 33: the best thing, its corruption, therefore the worst, 33: the amount of, is what a man has between him and God, 33, 35: differences in, do not dissolve natural or civil obligations, 39: does not depend on probabilities, ii. 20: zeal in, against supposed error, in danger of becoming wrath, iii. 97: real, in the heart, its bearing on the ordinance of baptism, 170.
Reproofs, church, not directed by John against officers only, ii. 177.
Rewards and punishments in this life, the principle of, i. 7, 214: influence of, on society, 215: how punishment ought to be administered, 216.
Riches and poverty, i. 122.
Robinson, John. [*See* Life of, vol. i., and various notices of, vol. iii. 464—475.]
Rome. Is Rome a true church? the question examined, ii. 293—302: the negative proved, 302—307: admitted to be the mother of the English Establishment, 304, 305.

Sacrifice of Christ, iii. 264.
Saints, characteristics of, constitute the church, ii. 110—128: form the highest order in the church, 228: perfect in Christ, 272.
Salvation, apostolic labours insufficient to secure; illumination or "drawing" (John vi. 44) necessary to, i. 315: more than publishing the gospel necessary to, 316: refusal of, by the lost, 328.
Schism, what its origin, i. 70: description of, 71: separation of the Independents from the Establishment does not constitute, ii. 87.
Schwenckfeldians, account of, ii. 282.
Scriptures, their design and province, i. 43: their perfection does not exclude reason, i. 46: translations of, and the originals, their comparative value, i. 47: have but one immediate proper sense, i. 48: obscure words and phrases in, how to interpret, 49: com-

Hosted by Google

mentaries to be used, 51: to be expounded by other scriptures, ii. 178; interpretation of, by Episcopalians, to support their theory and practice, 217.
Selfishness detestable, i. 164.
Separation, when lawful, ii. 268.
Shepherds, properties of, overthrow diocesan Episcopacy, ii. 412.
Silence, not always wise and right, i. 106.
Simplicity and craftiness illustrated, i. 81.
Sin, its punishment, i. 210: rational creatures capable of, 210: are men compelled to? 393: liberty and necessity to commit may co-exist, 398: itself unreasonable, 211: its greatness, 212: against the Holy Ghost, 213: followed by punishment, 214: God the author of, denied by the Synod of Dort, 273: cause of, in Adam, 274: privative, 294: exists in the soul, 296: none, light, ii. 15: connivance at, in what it consists, 257: from the creature only, iii. 239: permitted by God, 240: original, experience proves, 246—249.
Slander, what constitutes, i. 174: devilish, injurious to all, 176: good conscience and a good name, a defence against, 177.
Smyth, the Rev. J., change of sentiment, iii. 460.
Sobriety, the demand of scripture and nature, i. 128: joined to watchfulness, 130.
Society and friendship natural to man, i. 157: should be sought, 159.
Soul, origin of, iii. 247.
Southwark, church at, account of by the Rev. J. Waddington and the Editor, iii. 439—454.
Speech, an index of the mind, i. 100: of the wise, profitable, 101: injurious, unbecoming, 103: long and short, when commendable, 105.
Substance and circumstance, difference between, ii. 22.
Sumner, Geo., his interesting work on Pilgrims of Leyden, in Memoir of Robinson, 1.
Suspicion, definition of, i. 180: when carried to extremes, violates the law of charity, 181: to be avoided, 182.
Swearing, irreverent toward God, i. 203: punishment of, 204.
Synagogues, nature of, ii. 197.
Synods, no authority for, in Acts xv. ii. 208.

Teachers, false, no Scripture commands to hear, ii. 460.
Temples and consecrated places, iii. 59.
Temptations, what included in, i. 189: how drawn into, 190; advantageous to the pious, 191: to be delivered from, should be a matter of prayer, 192.
Testimony, human, when useful, i. 57.
Things, use and abuse of, 119—122: indifferent, on what principle to be used, iii. 59—62.
Thoughts of evil, not always evil thoughts, i. 90: judged of by man and by God on different principles, i. 100.
Truth, what class of persons God will direct in, i. 41; and false-

Hosted by Google

hood, definition of, 72: to be reverenced, above all men, 73: to be propagated, 74: to confirm it, three different methods, i. 202.
Tyre and Sidon, repentance of, i. 396.

Union among Christians, marks of, i. 331: with the unholy to be avoided, 351.

Wadsworth, Thomas. [*See* notice of, iii. 452.]
Watson, Dr. James, pastor of the church at Southwark, iii. 453.
Wealth, the purpose for which it is bestowed; its accumulation for the most part contrary to God's method in nature and grace, i. 22: not used does not make rich, 122: temptations of, 124.
Well-doing, equability and perseverance in, habitual to the good man, i. 24.
Will of God, its nature and its exercise, i. 12, 13.
Wisdom of God, manifest in his works, nature of his works, and how controlled by, i. 13, 14: and folly illustrated, i. 83: importance of, 86.
Works of God exhibit his perfections, the result of his will, power, and wisdom, i. 11—17.
Worship, according to the Prayer-book, false, ii. 450.

Youth (and age,) influence of in the commonwealth, i. 250: what is becoming to each, 251: virtue of, grateful in old age, 252: the honour of age cannot be borne by, 253: to live well in, is wise, 253.

Zeal, defined, in religion, despised by wordly men, i. 204: false and true described, 205, 206: requires to be regulated, ii. 1—5: its characteristics, ii. 25.

Hosted by Google

INDEX

OF AUTHORS REFERRED TO OR QUOTED,

WITH OCCASIONAL BRIEF NOTICES OF THEIR WORKS AND LIVES.

Æmilius, Paulus, historian, born at Verona, died in Paris 1529, i. 243.

Agesilaus, King of Sparta, died B.C. 362, i. 104.

Ainsworth, Rev. H., [*see* notice of, vol. iii. 462], i. 405, 407, 411; ii. 1, 50, 51, 59, 157; iii. 106, 107, 127.

Alciatus, Andrew, a Milanese lawyer, died at Pavia in 1550, i. 79.

Alison, Dr. R., a divine of the English Church, ii. 7, 47.

Allen, Rev. W., D.D. [*See* Descendants of Robinson, i. lxxi.]

Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, born 333, died 397, i. 73, 100, 131, 169, 190, 233, 243, 255.

Anacharsis, A Scythian philosopher, flourished 600 years B.C. i. 54.

Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, born in Piedmont, died in 1109, i. 210.

Antisthenes, an Athenian philosopher, born B.C. 423, i. 177.

Antoninus Marcus, philosopher and emperor, born 121, died 180, i. 139.

Aristotle, the head of the Peripatetic School at Stagyra in Thrace, flourished, B.C. 384, i. 73, 130, 244, 252.

Arminius, James, a Dutch divine, professor of divinity at Leyden, died 1609, iii. 52.

Audæus, founder of the sect of Audæans, ii. 45.

Augustine, an African Father, born in 354. His mother Monica was an example of maternal piety, i. 6, 8, 14, 18, 19, 28, 41, 72, 74, 83, 90, 94, 110, 119, 126, 130, 146, 155, 157, 165, 167, 168, 187, 192, 197, 198, 229, 230, 233, 251, 254, 255, 256, 258; iii. 33, 50, 61, 78.

Bancroft, Dr., a tyrannical flatterer and bishop of King James, ii. 50, 81, 82, 93.

Barlow, Bishop of Winchester, ii. 219.

Barrowe, Henry. [*See* notices of, vol. iii. 106, 439.]

Basil, Bishop of Cæsarea, born 326, i. 174.

Bastingius, Jer., ii. 219.

Hosted by Google

Bernard, a divine of the Romish Church, Abbott of the Monastery of Clairvaux, born in 1091, i. 20, 25, 62, 76, 78, 79, 110, 114, 126, 173, 175, 187, 193, 203, 256.
Bernard, Richard, Vicar of Worksop, and afterwards Rector of Batcombe. [*See* ii. throughout.]
Beza, Theo., born in 1519 in Burgundy, died 1605, i. 94, 210; ii. 219; iii. 32, 33.
Bodinus, John, a French lawyer, born 1530, died 1596, i. 81, 111, 182, 215; iii. 42.
Bœthius, a Roman philosopher, and profound scholar, i. 128, 143.
Bradshaw, W., Rev., a celebrated Puritan, ii. 6; iii. 360.
Broughton, Hugh, a celebrated polemical writer, born 1549, died 1612, iii. 10.
Brook's Lives, [often quoted in editorial notices.]
Browne, Robert, [*see* notice of, iii. 457], ii. 57.
Bucanus, Guil., a celebrated continental divine of the 16th century, iii. 23, 27, 45.
Bucer, Gerson, a learned divine of the sixteenth century, iii. 28, 33.

Calvin, John, born at Noyon in Picardy in 1509, died 1564. His works form nine volumes folio, i. 31, 92, 149, 156, 177, 184, 196, 223, 230, 231, 242, 250; iii. 23, 26, 59.
Carleton's, Bishop of Chichester, letters from Dort, i. 265; iii. 35, 62.
Cartwright, Thos., a Puritan divine, born in 1555, persecuted by Archbishop Grindal, imprisoned, died at Warwick in 1603, i. 86, 132, 164; ii. 81, 220; iii. 16, 333.
Cassander, Geo., a German controversialist, born 1515, died 1566, i. 126.
Cato, an illustrious Roman soldier and author, born B.C. 232, died 148, i. 226.
Celsus, a famous physician at Rome, who wrote a Treatise of Rhetoric, i. 49.
Chadderton's Sermons, Dr. Lawrence, ii. 81.
Chemnitius, M., a Lutheran divine, born 1522, died 1586, i. 121, 201; iii. 45.
Chrysostom, John, a Greek father, born at Antioch in 354, died at Pityus on the Euxine Sea, in the year 407. On account of his eloquence he was surnamed Chrysostom, *i. e.* Golden-mouthed, i. 49, 151, 160, 173, 177, 182, 206, 223, 241; iii. 42, 53.
Cicero, the celebrated Roman orator, born B.C. 106, died B.C. 43, i. 31, 69, 73, 104, 131, 134, 148, 165, 168, 169, 203, 209, 215, 233, 235, 251.
Cluse, De Les, a French preacher in Amsterdam, [*see* notice of, iii. 127], iii. 132, 148.
Comenius, a divine at Amsterdam, born 1592, died 1671, i. 55.
Cyprian, an African father, born at Carthage in the first half of the third century, i. 122, 172, 198; iii. 7, 23, 41.
Cyril, Patriarch of Alexandria, died 444, i. 60, 200.

Hosted by Google

Daneus, Lambert, a celebrated divine, i. 160.
Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria, a disciple of Origen, i. 3.
Donatus. [*See* notice of, ii. 44.]
Dove, Dr., an English divine, ii. 184.
Downame, Dr., Bishop of Derry, ii. 91, 184.

Edwards, President, works referred to in note, i. 294.
Epictetus, a stoic philosopher in the reign of the Emperor Domitian, originally a slave, i. 169.
Erasmus, Desiderius, was born at Rotterdam in 1467, reputed the most learned man of his day in Europe; works, 10 vols. folio, i. 97, 119, 238, 247.
Eusebius, Pamphilius, born in Palestine about 270, died about 338; author of Ecclesiastical History, &c.; works, 3 vols folio, i. 20, 27, 73, 83, 176, 217; iii. 49, 58, 328.
Euring, William. [*See* notice of, iii. 283.]

Ferus, i. 23.
Ficinus, Marcilius, lived in the fifteenth century, i. 32.
Fox, the martyrologist, a native of Boston, born 1517, died 1587, ii. 220.

Gellius, John, born at Florence in 1498, was a learned shoe-maker, a member of the academy at that city, an eminent Greek scholar; Dialogues are highly valued, i. 240.
Giffard's book referred to, ii. 45, *et alibi*.
Greenham, a Puritan divine at Drayton and Christchurch, born 1531, died 1591, i. 91, 169.
Greenwood, John, B.A. [*See* notice of, iii. 439.]
Gregory Nazianzen, Bishop of Constantinople, was born in 324; works, 2 vols folio, i. 27, 130, 132, 134, 140, 151, 155, 164, 190, 191, 198, 208, 228, 256.
Grotius, Hugo, was the son of a Burgomaster at Delft, born in 1583; his works are numerous and learned, i. 101, 156, 192, 257; iii. 101.

Hale's Letters from Dort, referred to, i. 265.
Hall's Rev. Peter, "Harmony of Protestant Confessions," referred to or quoted in editorial notices, i. 265, 273; iii. 9, 10, 17.
Hall, Bishop. [*See* notice of, iii. 397.]
Hanbury, Benjamin. Notices of his works often occur in editorial notes, ii. 59; iii. 84, 127, especially 453, 459, 463, 465.
Hellwisse, [*see* a biographical sketch of, iii. 155], i. 342, 452.
Herodotus, Greek historian, born at Halicarnassus, B.C. 484, i. 176.
Hooper, Bishop of Gloucester, martyr in 1555, ii. 220.
Hubert, i. 175.

Ignatius, a disciple of the evangelist John, Bishop of Antioch, and a martyr, torn to pieces by lions at Rome, 107; i. 60, 140, 169; iii. 49.

Hosted by Google

Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons, a disciple of Polycarp, i. 48, 82.
Isidorus, an exegetical writer at Pelusium, died A.D. 450, i. 165.

Jacob, Henry, [*see* notice of, iii. 444; character of, 446], ii. 17, 82, 221, 397; iii. 58, 339.
Jerome, a native of Prague, a disciple of John Huss, died a martyr in 1416, i. 46, 115, 122, 128, 133, 227, 242, 256; iii. 5.
Johnson, Francis, Amsterdam, ii. 6, 50, 62, 397; iii. 25, 360, 441, *et alibi.*
Josephus, the Jewish Historian, born A.D. 37, died 95, i. 90, 232, 242; iii. 299.
Junius, Francis, Professor of Divinity at Leyden, i. 12, 44; iii. 14, 16, 49, 55, 61, 101, 149.

Keckerman, Bartholomew, Professor of Philosophy, Dantzic, died 1609, i. 42, 95, 143; iii. 45.
Knox, John, the celebrated Scotch reformer, i. 296.

Lactantius, a father of the church; Constantine appointed him tutor to his son, i. 131, 149, 150, 179, 219, 220.
Laertius, Diogenes, a Greek author, died A.D. 222, i. 121, 152, 239.
Livius, or Livy, the celebrated Roman historian, born B.C. 59, died A.D. 17, i. 82, 138.
Lucifer, Bishop of Cagliari in the fourth century, ii. 44.
Luther, the celebrated German reformer, i. 48, 60.

Macrobius, a Latin writer of the fourth century, i. 342.
Maldonatus, a Spanish Jesuit, who wrote on original sin, and on grace, &c., ii. 219.
Martial, the epigrammatic poet, born in Spain, died in 104, i. 125.
Martyr, Justin, an early Greek writer, martyred at Rome, 165, iii. 49.
Martyr, Peter, a native of Florence, a Professor of Divinity at Oxford in the reign of Edward VI., i. 57; ii. 447; iii. 58.
Melancthon, Luther's companion, i. 49, 140, 233, 250; ii. 232, 446.
Menander, a Greek poet, flourished at Athens, B.C. 342; i. 95, 236.
Morneus, Philip, a French divine, i. 32, 45, 68, 104.
Morton, or Murton, i. 266, 267, 449, 466.
Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, often referred to in editorial notes.

Neal, History of the Puritans. [*See* various notes.]
Nicholas, Henry, the founder of the sect of the Familists, i. 390.
Novatian. [*See* notice of, ii. 45.]

Paget, John, a writer against the Separatists in Holland, iii. 127.
Panormita, i. 96.
Pareus, David, a celebrated German divine of the seventeenth century, i. 242; iii. 75.
Parker, Matthew, an episcopal divine, iii. 33, 69.
Patricius, Francis, an Italian author of the sixteenth century, i. 128.

Hosted by Google

Payne, Dr. George, quoted. [*See* note, i. 294.]
Perkins, William, a Puritan divine of Cambridge, [*see* notice of, iii. 425], i. 16, 62, 193, 202, 257, 467, 468; ii. 446; iii. 23, 61, 425, *et alibi*.
Philo-Judæus, a learned Jewish writer, flourished in the first century, i. 5, 112.
Philpot, Bishop, the martyr, i. 194.
Pindarus, the prince of lyric poets, flourished, 500 B.C., i. 119.
Piscator, the celebrated commentator, born 1546, died 1626, iii. 23.
Plato, Athenian philosopher, flourished, 430 B.C., i. 92, 219, 226, 249.
Plautus, a Roman writer, died B.C. 184, i. 76.
Pliny, the natural historian, born A.D. 23, perished at Herculaneum 79, i. 137, 164, 165.
Plutarch, a celebrated historian, a native of Cheronea, in Bœotia, died 140, i. 23, 79, 88, 92, 97, 101, 120, 121, 134, 161, 172, 173, 216, 228, 234, 237, 251, *et alibi*.
Politian, a learned Tuscan historian, poet, and critic, died 1494, i. 89, 173, 193.
Polybius, a Greek historian, died B.C. 121, i. 133.

Ringelberd, a Dutch divine of the sixteenth century, i. 114.

Sadeel, Anthony, a celebrated divine, Hebrew Professor at Geneva, whose works are published in three vols. folio, ii. 447; iii. 14, 58.
Sallust, a Latin author, born B.C. 86, died B.C. 34, i. 132.
Scaliger, a voluminous writer, born 1540, died 1609, i. 5, 38, 59, 60, 64, 72, 172, 224, 225, 235, 256; iii. 22.
Scott, Rev. Thomas, referred to in note, i. 265.
Seneca, a Roman philosopher, flourished in the beginning of the first century, i. 20, 67, 78, 86, 102, 122, 146, 159, 160, 172, 180, 193, 216, *et alibi*.
Smyth, John, the Separatist at Amsterdam, who became a Baptist, i. 452; ii. 1, 62, 157, 216; iii. 168, 169, *et alibi*.
Snecanus, Gellius, a celebrated divine of the sixteenth century, iii. 37, 75.
Socrates, the Athenian philosopher, born B.C. 469, died B.C. 399, i. 79.
Stœbus, John, a Greek author of the fifth century, i. 239.
Stoughton, Rev. J., "Spiritual Heroes," quoted in note, iii. 446.
Suetonius, the Roman historian of the second century, i. 103, 180, 232, 235.
Sumner's Memoirs of the Pilgrims at Leyden. [*See* Robinson's Memoir, i.]

Tacitus, the celebrated historian, i. 148.
Terence, a Roman poet, an African by birth, died B.C. 159, i. 22, 129, 146, 224, 251.
Tertullian, a father of the church, flourished under the emperors Severus and Caracalla, i. 12, 25, 31, 40, 47, 49, 50, 72, 77, 91, 108, 146, 188, 200, 252, *et alibi;* iii. 7, 13, 19, 25, 28, 40 49, 78.

Hosted by Google

Thales, the founder of the Ionic sect of philosophers, died B.C. 545, i. 2, 33.
Theodoret, an ecclesiastical historian and commentator, &c.; works, 4 vols. folio, i. 104.
Tremelius, joint translator of the Scriptures with Junius, iii. 149.

Udal, John, [*see* notice of, ii. 220.]
Underhill, E. B., Esq., frequently referred to in editorial notes, i. 452; iii. 456, 459, *et alibi*.
Ursinus, A German Divine, Professor at Heidelberg i. 59, 417; iii. 23.

Varro, Roman writer, died B.C. 29, iii. 54.
Virgil, Polydorus, Latin historian, born at Urbino, died 1595, iii. 45.

Whitaker, Dr., a writer against Popery, died 1595, i. 45, 47, 56; iii. 36, 39.
Whitgift, Archbishop of Canterbury, ii. 220.
Williams, Dr. Ed., "Treatise on Equity and Sovereignty," note, i. 294.
Willoughby, Lord, i. 82, 92.
Wolfius, John, a Latin Divine of the sixteenth century, iii. 40, 59.

Yates, J., B.D., biographical notice of, iii. 283.
Young's Chronicles, ii. 59, and iii., frequently.

Zanchius, Petrus, i. 64, 77, 80; ii. 447; iii. 33, 62.
Zuinglius, the celebrated Swiss reformer, ii. 218.

Hosted by Google

INDEX

OF IMPORTANT TEXTS OF SCRIPTURE

ILLUSTRATED OR QUOTED.

Chap.	Ver.	Vol.	Page
GENESIS.			
2	17	i.	404
3	15	iii.	128
4	12, 16	iii.	128
6	2—5.	iii.	128
17	7	i.	439
22	2—12	i.	281
EXODUS.			
4	21, 22	i.	281
32	32, 33	i.	375
LEVITICUS.			
20	24	i.	346
26	11, 12	i.	346
NUMBERS.			
6	23, 24	i.	499
11	28	iii.	308
11	29	iii.	310
DEUTERONOMY.			
4	37	i.	321
7	7, 8	i.	321
11	2	i.	405
14	2	i.	321
1 SAMUEL.			
23		i.	298
2 SAMUEL.			
16	10	i.	303
24	1	i.	304
1 KINGS.			
21	26	i.	396
22	22	i.	304
2 CHRONICLES.			
12	10, 11, 12	i.	278
12	1, 15, 16	i.	282
17	7—34.	iii.	311
36	16	i.	332
JOB.			
1	21	i.	304
PSALMS.			
4	3	i.	313
16	3	i.	322
103	14	i.	410
115	3	i.	313
PROVERBS.			
16	4	i.	301
ISAIAH.			
45	19	i.	369
JEREMIAH.			
23	11, 14, 17, 22	i.	398

Hosted by Google

EZEKIEL.

Chap.	Ver.	Vol.	Page
18	18	i.	291
18	18	i.	409
33	11	i.	291
33	18	i.	289

MATTHEW.

4	10	i.	416
5	15	i.	372
6	9	ii.	499
8	31, 32	i.	306
10	1, 5, 6	iii.	313
11	11	iii.	314
13	30	iii.	75
13	24—30	ii.	121
13	47—50	ii.	128
16	16—18	ii.	133, 154, 156
18	15—17	ii.	184
18	7	i.	391
18	15—17	iii.	32
18	17	ii.	178
18	20	i.	448
22	.	i.	335
22	14	i.	317
24	24	i.	301
26	53	i.	298
28	16	i.	455
28	19	i.	448
28	19	ii.	96, 98, 155

MARK.

5	12, 13	i.	306

LUKE.

3	6	i.	342
7	30	i.	301
8	32	i.	306
11	2	ii.	499

JOHN.

4	28, 29, 39	iii.	316
6	44	i.	401
8	44	iii.	128
9	22	ii.	196
10	27, 28	i.	382
10	3, 8, 27	iii.	370
12	39, 40	i.	309
12	42	ii.	196
13	1	i.	383
16	2	ii.	196
17	6, 9, 14, 16	ii.	350
20	21—23	ii.	155

ACTS.

1	15, 23—25	ii.	145
1	20—26	iii.	37
2	38, 39	i.	421
2	40	ii.	348
2	39	iii.	213, 227
5	3	i.	298
6	3, 6	ii.	145
6	1—8.	iii.	38
10	34, 35	ii.	71
13	48	i.	366
14	21—23	ii.	145
14	27	ii.	208
14	23	iii.	38
15	18	i.	398
15	1—3, 23	ii.	208
15	.	iii.	38
17	26	i.	407
19	8, 9	ii.	349
20	35	i.	23

ROMANS.

1	28—32	i.	282
2	5	i.	323, 338
2	29	i.	385
4	11	i.	440
4	11	iii.	210
5	6, 8	i.	329
5	12	i.	405
5	12, 14	iii.	244
5	10	i.	259
6	11	i.	419
7	1	i.	405
9	.	i.	349 seq.
10	14, 15	ii.	402
11	32	i.	345
14	17, 18	ii.	72
15	20	ii.	273

1 COR.

1	1	ii.	104
2	14, 15	i.	314

Hosted by Google

Chap.	Ver.	Vol.	Page
3	6, 7	i.	315
5	. . .	ii.	178, 251
5	4, 5	ii.	227
5	11	ii.	323
7	14	i.	422
7	14	iii.	18
9	1, 2	ii.	10
9	2	ii.	402, 403
10	1, 2	i.	425
10	16	ii.	98
10	20, 21	ii.	70
10	25, 27	ii.	27
10	18	iii.	372
11	. . .	ii.	264
12	4	i.	290
12	28	ii.	182, 225
13	10, 12	iii.	269
14	. . .	ii.	274—251
14	3	iii.	*55*
14	26	iii.	303
14	30	iii.	306
14	. . .	iii.	323
15	22	i.	413
15	21—26	iii.	244

2 COR.

2	6	iii.	37
5	14, 15	i.	330
6	. . .	ii.	344
6	1	i.	380
6	14—18	ii.	339
11	13	iii.	173

GAL.

4	22—31	i.	433

EPH.

2	8	i.	323
4	8—11	ii.	161
4	11, 12	ii.	170, 420
4	12, 13	iii.	269
4	8—11	iii.	315

PHIL.

2	13	i.	401

COL.

1	17	ii.	274
3	12	i.	324

1 THESS.

1	4—6	i.	324

2 THESS.

2	. . .	i.	305
2	3, 4	ii.	427, 468
3	15	ii.	323

1 TIM.

1	19	i.	375
2	6	i.	331
2	6	iii.	259
4	6	ii.	399
4	10	i.	331

2 TIM.

2	18—20	iii.	262
2	25	i.	323

HEB.

11	15	i.	371

1 PETER.

2	1	i.	323
2	5	ii.	328
4	4, 10, 11	iii.	320

2 PETER.

2	1, 11	iii.	263
3	4	i.	297
3	9	i.	332

1 JOHN.

1	6	ii.	339
2	12	iii.	270
2	19	i.	385, 389
2	18, 19	i.	263

REV.

2	2, 9	iii.	173
6	11	i.	332
11	3	iii.	321
13	8—11	i.	376
14	6	iii.	322

London: Reed and Pardon, Printers, Paternoster-row.

Hosted by Google

NEW AND VALUABLE WORKS

PUBLISHED BY

JOHN SNOW, 35, PATERNOSTER ROW.

Now ready, beautifully printed in demy 18mo., large type, bound in cloth, lettered, price 3*s.*; roan embossed, gilt edges, 3*s.* 6*d.*,

Dr. Watts's Psalms and Hymns, carefully Revised and Rearranged. By JOSIAH CONDER.

In this Edition the Psalms are given in their Biblical order, with the omission of some of the duplicate versions, bracketed stanzas, and other portions not generally used. The Hymns are arranged in one book, according to their subjects.

*** An Edition in 32mo. will be ready in a few days.

This day is published, in post 8vo., with Maps and Illustrations, cloth lettered, price 7*s.*,

A Tour in South Africa, with Notices of NATAL, MAURITIUS, MADAGASCAR, CEYLON, EGYPT, and PALESTINE. By Rev. J. J. FREEMAN, Home Secretary of the London Missionary Society.

Just published, in 18mo., price 6*d.*; or for distribution, 25 Copies for 10*s.*,

The Great Exhibition Spiritualized. By Rev. HENRY BIRCH.

"We wish we could see this invaluable little book put into the hands of every individual visiting the Crystal Palace."

Oliver Cromwell; or, England in the Past viewed in Relation to England in the Present. By Rev. J. D. SMITH. Fourth Edition. Foolscap 8vo., cloth lettered, 1*s.*

This day is published, in small 8vo., elegantly bound, gilt edges, price 5*s.*,

The Poet of the Sanctuary. A Centenary Commemoration of the Labours and Services, Literary and Devotional, of the Rev. ISAAC WATTS, D.D. Preceded by Remarks on the Origin of Psalmody and Christian Hymnology in Earlier Times. By JOSIAH CONDER, Esq., Author of the "Choir and the Oratory," &c. &c.

The Pye Smith Testimonial. Proceedings at a Public Breakfast in the London Tavern, on the Presentation of a Testimonial to the Rev. JOHN PYE SMITH, D.D., LL.D., F.R.S., F.G.S., &c. &c.; containing an Account of its Origin and Objects, with a List of the Contributors. 8vo., 1*s.*

Lectures on Christian Theology. By the late Rev. GEORGE PAYNE, LL.D., Professor of Divinity in the Western College. With a Memoir by Rev. JOHN PYER, and Reminiscences by Rev. RALPH WARDLAW, D.D. Edited by Rev. EVAN DAVIES. In two handsome volumes 8vo., with Portrait, cloth lettered, 21*s.*

"Every Church should present a copy of this invaluable work to their minister."

"To students, preachers, and pastors,—to gentlemen of station and culture,—to men of all ranks and conditions that can afford the moderate price, we most cordially recommend them, as an invaluable addition to the best portion of our Theology."—*British Banner.*

In foolscap 8vo., the SECOND and CHEAP EDITION, with important Additions, 4*s.* 6*d.*,

Spiritual Heroes; or, Sketches of the Puritans, their Character and Times. By Rev. J. STOUGHTON.

"We are glad to see a second edition of Mr. Stoughton's admirable work upon the early Puritans. Few books could come more seasonably at the present time."—*Tait's Magazine.*

THIRTY-EIGHTH THOUSAND.—This day is published, a New and Revised Edition, in larger Type, with Portrait, 1*s.*; cloth lettered, 1*s.* 6*d.*,

The Conversion and Death-bed Experience of Mrs. Little; to which is added, A GUIDE TO PEACE WITH GOD.

"Gold, with its untold millions, is a nonentity compared with the value of this volume, which, we feel assured, has imparted so much comfort and peace to the thousands who have perused it. We say to every individual, Read this book."

Hosted by Google

Popery and Puseyism illustrated. A Series of Essays, with Addresses and Appeals to the Sunday-School Teachers of England. By Rev. JOHN CAMPBELL, D.D. In foolscap 8vo., cloth, 2*s.* 6*d.*

This day is published, in 18mo., price 6*d.*; cloth, gilt edges, 1*s.*,

The Tenderness of Jesus illustrated. By Rev. J. W. RICHARDSON.

The Believer's Assurance of Salvation: Is it ATTAINABLE? By Rev. W. DAVIS. In 18mo., cloth, gilt edges, price 1*s.*

NEW MISSIONARY WORK ON INDIA.

Now ready, the THIRD EDITION, in 1 vol. post 8vo., cloth lettered, price 6*s.*,

India and the Gospel; or, an Empire for the Messiah. By Rev. W. CLARKSON, Missionary. With Introductory Remarks by Rev. T. ARCHER, D.D.

"The book should be circulated by tens of thousands."—*Evangelical Magazine.*

FIFTH EDITION.—In 18mo., cloth, price 1*s.* 6*d.*, with Engravings,

Missionary Encouragements in India; or, the Christian Village in Gujurat. By Rev. WILLIAM CLARKSON, Missionary.

"A volume of thrilling interest."

"We are not surprised that this small volume should have reached a Fifth Edition; and if its success be proportioned to its merits, many more editions will yet be called for."—*British Mothers' Magazine.*

Thy Past Impressions. By Rev. WILLIAM CLARKSON. Price Twopence.

"A truly heart-searching little tract, calculated to rouse the lukewarm professor, and to stimulate the devoted Christian. It is one of those publications which ought to have, and which, we think, will have, an immense sale. We say to every Christian, Buy and read this book."—*British Mothers' Magazine.*

Thy Spiritual Position. By Rev. W. CLARKSON. Price 2*d.*

A Glance at the Interior of China, obtained during a Journey through the Silk and Green-Tea Countries. By Rev. W. H. MEDHURST, D.D. 5*s.* 6*d.*

The Chinaman Abroad; an Account of the Malayan Archipelago, particularly of JAVA. By ONG-TAE-HAE. Translated from the Original, by Rev. W. H. MEDHURST, D.D. Price 3*s.* 6*d.*

English and Chinese Dictionary. By Rev. W. H. MEDHURST, D.D. In 2 vols. 8vo., half-bound, price 42*s.*

A Dissertation on the Silk Manufacture, and the Cultivation of the Mulberry. Translated from the Works of TSEU-KWANG-K'HE, called also Paul Sin, a Colao, or Minister of State in China. Price 4*s.* 6*d.*

A Dissertation on the Theology of the Chinese, with a view to the elucidation of the most appropriate term for expressing the Deity in the Chinese Language. By Rev. W. H. MEDHURST, D.D. 8vo., price 5*s.*

Recreations; Physical and Mental, Lawful and Unlawful: a Lecture. By THOMAS AVELING. Foolscap 8vo., 1*s.*, stiff covers.

A Jubilee Memorial; being the Substance of Two Sermons preached at Kingsland Chapel, June 16, 1844, on occasion of the Jubilee of that Place of Worship, with a Statement relative to its Origin, Founders, and First Pastor, &c. By the same Author. 12mo., cloth, 1*s.*

The Mother's Practical Guide in the Physical, Intellectual, and Moral Training of her Children; with an additional Chapter upon the Claims and Responsibilities of Step-mothers. By Mrs. J. BAKEWELL. Third Edition, cloth, 3*s.* 6*d.*

Friendly Hints to Female Servants on the best means of promoting their Own and their Employer's Happiness. By the same Author. In cloth, 8*d.*

Conversation Cards on Intellectual and Moral Subjects: designed for the Instruction and Entertainment of Social Parties. By the same Author. Second Thousand, in a neat cloth case, 2*s.* 6*d.*

Hosted by Google

Temperance and Teetotalism; being a Candid Inquiry into the Lawfulness or Unlawfulness of using Distilled and Fermented Liquors; conducted on the grounds of SCRIPTURE, PHILOSOPHY, and EXPEDIENCY, but especially SCRIPTURE. With an Appendix. By Rev. J. H. BARROW. Demy 12mo., cloth, 1*s.* 6*d.*

The Old Ministry; or, the Inefficiency of Modern Preaching compared with the Apostolic Administration of the Gospel. By Rev. N. S. S. BEMAN, D.D. 18mo., cloth, 1*s.* 6*d.*

Salvation, and the Way to Secure it. By the Rev. A. MORTON BROWN, LL.D., of Cheltenham. Price 6*d.*; cloth, gilt edges, 1*s.*

"A book for the whole world. We shall rejoice in hearing that it is circulated not only by thousands, but by millions."

Illustrations of the Practical Power of Faith, in a Series of Popular Discourses on part of the Eleventh Chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews. By Rev. THOMAS BINNEY. Second Edition, foolscap 8vo., cloth, 5*s.*

Patristic Evenings. By JOHN BIRT. Post 8vo., cloth, 6*s.*

"This is a volume for all: a rich storehouse of general knowledge—the result of immense reading, and not a little reflection."—*Christian Witness.*

Egypt; a Popular and Familiar Description of the Land, People, and Produce. With an Introductory Essay, by Rev. T. BOAZ, LL.D., Missionary from Calcutta. Second Edition, with a Map and Fifty Engravings, foolscap 8vo., cloth, 5*s.* 6*d.*

"This account of Egypt has already attained to the honour of a Second Edition, and it is not difficult to prophesy that many more editions will be called for. It is by far the best account of Egypt which we possess; popularly and pleasingly written; and bringing before the mind's eye a more perfect picture of the country and its curiosities, its people and their manners, than we ever remember to have had produced by a mere description in words. It is eminently adapted for family reading, and might usefully be introduced into schools as a reading class-book."—*Critic.*

Memoir of the Life and Writings of Thomas Cartwright, B.D., the distinguished Puritan Reformer; including the principal Ecclesiastical Movements in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth. By Rev. BENJAMIN BROOK. 1 vol. 8vo., cloth, 10*s.* 6*d.*

"It is worth being born to write such a work as this, which furnishes the real character of the Reformation, with an account of its interruption by the secular power, and the efforts of the principal Reformers to carry it to a greater extent, pointing out the only legitimate sources of Reform."—*Christian Witness.*

Wesleyan Hymnology; or, a Companion to the Wesleyan Hymn-Book; comprising Remarks—Critical, Explanatory, and Cautionary; designed to promote the more profitable use of the Volume. Second Edition. Revised and corrected; with an Appendix, in which the work is vindicated from the censures recently thrown upon it. By Rev. W. P. BURGESS. 18mo., cloth, 3*s.*

Recollections of Northern India. With Observations on the Origin, Customs, and Moral Sentiments of the Hindoos; and Remarks on the Country and Principal Places on the Ganges, &c. By Rev. WILLIAM BUYERS, Missionary at Benares, Author of "Letters on India," &c.

Letters on India; with Special Reference to the Spread of Christianity. By the same Author. 12mo., cloth, 5*s.*

Maritime Discovery and Christian Missions considered in their MUTUAL RELATIONS; comprehending the Discovery of India, America, and Polynesia; with the First Missions to those Regions; the Rise and Progress of the Missionary Spirit in England, &c. &c. By the Rev. JOHN CAMPBELL, D.D. 8vo., cloth, with many Engravings, 12*s.*

"A book of greater interest it has seldom been our lot to meet with: we do not recollect, indeed, ever to have perused one with more interest."—*Eclectic Review.*

Hosted by Google

Apostolical Independency, exemplified in the History, Doctrines, Discipline, and Ordinances of the CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES, commonly called "INDEPENDENT." By Rev. J. S. BRIGHT. Foolscap 8vo., cloth, 1*s.* 6*d.*

The Martyr of Erromanga; or, the Philosophy of Missions; illustrated from the Labours, Death, and Character of the late Rev. John Williams. By the Rev. JOHN CAMPBELL, D.D. Third and Cheap Edition, foolscap, cloth, with Portrait, 6*s.* Large Edition, 10*s.* 6*d.*

"No uninspired book has ever done such service to the cause of *Peace* as the 'Martyr of Erromanga.' To the prosecution of this Divine-like purpose, he brings a mind of no ordinary powers and acquirements, and reading of a prodigious amount, genius and imagination truly poetical, with a stern honesty of aim, and a sanctified zeal for truth."—*Herald of Peace.*

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

Memoirs of David Nasmith: his Labours and Travels in Great Britain, France, the United States, and Canada. 1 vol. royal 12mo., cloth, with Portrait, 10*s.* 6*d.*

Letters on the Bible Monopoly. 1 vol. 12mo., cloth, 2*s.* 6*d.*

Letters on Pastoral Visitation, District Meetings of Churches, Congregational Friendly Societies, and Sunday-School Instruction. Second Edition, 12mo., 1*s.*

Letters on Wesleyan Methodism in England and the Colonies, and a History of Whitfield's Churches. 8vo., 6*d.*

The Comprehensive Hymn-Book; One Thousand Hymns, Original and Selected. Fifth Edition, 24mo., in sheep, 3*s.*; roan, gilt edges, 4*s.*

Church Fellowship for Young People. With a Practical Essay on Marriage. 1*s.*

Sacramental Communion for Young People. A Treatise on the Lord's Supper. 1*s.*

Theology for Youth. Ninth Edition, 1*s.*

A Catechism on First Principles of Saving Knowledge. Ninth Edition, 3*d.*

A Catechism on the Facts of the New Testament. Ninth Edition, 4*d.*

A Catechism on the Facts of the Old Testament. Ninth Edition, 4*d.*

The Marrow of Modern Hymn-Books, for the use of Sunday Schools, &c. Eighth Edition, 4*d.*

Ten Sermons preached at the Tabernacle and Tottenham-Court Chapel. By Rev. JOHN CAMPBELL, D.D., and Rev. J. W. RICHARDSON. On the following important subjects:—Self-Examination—Self-Deception; Self-Approval—Self-Condemnation; Self-Denial—Self-Indulgence; Self-Distrust—Self-Confidence; Self-Preservation—Self-Destruction. Foolscap 8vo., cloth, 2*s.* 6*d.*

Profits to be devoted to the erection of Class-rooms for the instruction of Bible Classes in connection with the Tabernacle Catechetical School.

British India, in its Relation to the Decline of Hindooism, and the Progress of Christianity; containing Remarks on the Manners, Customs, and Literature of the People; on the Effects which Idolatry has produced upon their Civil, Moral, and Political Relations, &c. &c. By Rev. WILLIAM CAMPBELL, of the London Missionary Society. Second Thousand. 8vo., cloth, beautifully illustrated, 12*s.*

Hosted by Google

The Pastor's Glory and Joy. By Rev. LAWRENCE H. BYRNES, B.A. Post 8vo., 6*d.*

The German Reformation in the Nineteenth Century; or, Illustrations of Popery in Power, and of Truth in Conflict. With short Notices of the Religious State of Austria, Bavaria, Prussia, and the Baltic Provinces of Russia. By Mrs. STANLEY CARR. Second Thousand, post 8vo., cloth, 6*s.*

"It will afford us sincere pleasure to see this work a companion to every edition, ay, to every copy of D'Aubigne's History of the Reformation."—*Manchester Times.*

Confessions of a Convert from Baptism *IN* **Water to Baptism** *WITH* **Water.** Foolscap 8vo., cloth, 2*s.*

"We regard this work as a good antidote to counteract the flippant and dogmatic statements which are oftentimes advanced on the never-ending subject of Baptism; and which are continuously made by the most illiberal and least-informed portion of the immersion brethren. We cordially recommend this as a compendious, interesting, and excellent work, well adapted to inform and guard the minds of young persons, and of others who are uninformed, concerning the principal topics involved in the Baptismal controversy."—*Wesleyan Association Magazine.*

The Sick Visitor's Companion; consisting of Selections from the Sacred Scriptures, Short Addresses, and Prayers, suited to the Sick of different characters, and designed as a help to Christians who visit the Sick for religious purposes. By Rev. JOHN CORBIN. 12mo., cloth, 1*s.* 6*d.*

The Final Happiness of the Saints in Heaven: An Essay. By the late Rev. SAMUEL CORNFORD. 18mo., cloth, 1*s.* 6*d.*

Recently published, in one handsome volume 8vo., cloth lettered, price 2*s.* 6*d.*,

Lectures on Education, delivered at Crosby Hall. By EDWARD BAINES, Esq., Rev. A. WELLS, Rev. R. W. HAMILTON, LL.D., D.D., Rev. A. REED, EDWARD MIALL, Esq., Rev. HENRY RICHARD, and Rev. ROBERT AINSLIE, and published by the Congregational Board of Education.

American Scenes and Christian Slavery. A recent Tour of Four Thousand Miles in the United States. By EBENEZER DAVIES, Minister of Mission Chapel, New Amsterdam, Berbice. Post 8vo., cloth, 7*s.* 6*d.*

"It is impossible to do anything approaching to justice to this volume by statement. It must be read to be appreciated. It is one of those books that intelligent persons could read on and on, and for ever. The only page that will be perused with any feeling of uneasiness will be the last, to think that the feast is at an end."—*Christian Witness.*

China and her Spiritual Claims. By the Rev. EVAN DAVIES, late Missionary to the Chinese. Foolscap 8vo., cloth, 2*s.*

Memoir of the Rev. Samuel Dyer, Missionary to the Chinese. By the same Author. Foolscap 8vo., cloth, 4*s.* 6*d.*

The True Dignity of Human Nature; or, Man viewed in Relation to Immortality. By Rev. WM. DAVIS. Second Edition, 12mo., cloth, 3*s.* 6*d.*

Sacramental Meditations and Spiritual Experience. Forming a Practical Sequel to his celebrated Work—"The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul." By PHILIP DODDRIDGE, D.D. Cheap Edition, cloth, 1*s.* 6*d.*

Devotional Letters. Affording Advice and Consolation under Family Bereavements, and other trying Dispensations of Divine Providence. By the same Author. Cheap Edition, cloth, 1*s.* 6*d*

Parental Comfort in Parental Sorrow, addressed especially to Christian Parents Mourning the Death of Infant Children. By Rev. JOHN EDWARDS. Royal 32mo., 6*d.*

"This book is one of a class which will always be interesting, so long as there are children in the world and death among children. It is a tender and edifying treatise which cannot fail to be a favorite with every Christian family."—*Christian Witness.*

Hosted by Google

The Principles and Position of the Congregational Churches. By Rev. ALGERNON WELLS. 8vo., sewed, 6*d.*

A Series of Discourses on the Proper Deity of the Son of God, and the Primary Design of his Mission. By Rev. T. EAST. 8vo., cloth, 10*s.* 6*d.*

On Revivals of Religion. By JONATHAN EDWARDS. With Notes and Introduction by Rev. Dr. PATTON; and Introductory Preface by Rev. J. A. JAMES, of Birmingham. Cheap Edition, royal 8vo., 2*s.*

The History of the London Missionary Society; comprising an Account of the Origin of the Society, Biographical Notices of some of its Founders and Missionaries; with a Record of its Progress at Home, and its Operations Abroad. Compiled from Original Documents in the possession of the Society. By Rev. W. ELLIS, late Foreign Secretary of the Society, and Author of "Polynesian Researches." Vol. I. To be completed in 2 vols. 8vo., cloth, 10*s.* 6*d.*

*** Vol. II. will shortly appear.

The Island Queen: a Missionary Poem. By Mrs. ELLIS, Author of "The Women of England," "Sons of the Soil," &c. Post 8vo., cloth, 5*s.*

Now ready, for general circulation, price 2*s.* only, a New Edition of

Finney's Lectures on Revivals of Religion. Carefully Revised, with Notes, by the Rev. Dr. PATTON, and Introductory Preface by the Rev. J. A. JAMES, of Birmingham.

"Such a course of twenty-two Lectures was never before published in our own or any other language."—*Revivalist.*

This day is published, price 4*d.*,

Repentance: Its Nature, Grounds, Necessity, and Infinite Importance. By Rev. C. G. FINNEY.

Professor Finney on Prayer. Price 6*d.*; cloth, gilt edges, 1*s.*

The History of the Revival and Progress of Independency in England, since the Period of the Reformation. With an Introduction, containing an Account of the Development of the Principles of Independence in the Age of Christ and his Apostles, and of the Gradual Departure of the Church into Anti-Christian Error, until the Time of the Reformation. By JOSEPH FLETCHER. 4 vols. foolscap 8vo., sewed., 1*s.* 6*d.* each; cloth lettered, 2*s.*

A Gentile's Entreaty. By Rev. J. J. FREEMAN. 18mo., cloth, 1*s.*

This day is published, in small 8vo., price 5*s.*,

Paul the Apostle; or, Sketches from his Life. By the Rev. H. J. GAMBLE.

Scripture Baptism; being a Series of Familiar Letters to a Friend, in reply to "Christian Baptism," recently published by the Hon. and Rev. Baptist Noel, M.A. By HENRY J. GAMBLE, of Hanover Chapel, Peckham. Foolscap 8vo., cloth, 4*s.*

Genius of the Sabbath; or, the Nature and Design of the Sabbath, and its perpetual Obligation upon the Church. 18mo., cloth, 1*s.*; silk, gilt edges, 1*s.* 6*d.*

"Everything would naturally be at *rest.*"—*Owen*, on Psalm cxxx., p. 36.

Christian Baptism: an Inquiry into the Scriptural Evidence of the Mode, the Subject, and the Design of the Rite, and the Meaning of the Term. By Rev. J. H. GODWIN. Foolscap 8vo., cloth, 6*s.* 6*d.*

The Christian Philosopher triumphing over Death; being a Narrative of the Closing Scenes of the Life of the late WILLIAM GORDON, M.D., F.L.S., of Kingston-upon-Hull. By Rev. NEWMAN HALL, B.A. Ninth Thousand, crown 8vo., cloth, 4*s.*

Hosted by Google

Come to Jesus. By Rev. NEWMAN HALL, B.A. Two Hundred and Second Thousand, price 3*d.*; large paper, 4*d.*; cloth, gilt edges, 1*s.*

"A valuable little book: we strongly recommend all our readers to get it."—*Friendly Visitor.*

"It is I;" or, the Voice of Jesus in the Storm. By the same Author. Fifty-seventh Thousand, demy 18mo., 6*d.*; cloth, gilt edges, 1*s.*

The Scriptural Claims of Teetotalism. Addressed to British Christians. By the same Author. Third Edition, price 3*d.*

"It is good neither to eat flesh nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak."—*St. Paul.*

Divine Socialism; or, the Man Christ Jesus. By the same Author, 8*d.*

My Baptized One. Thoughts for Thinking Parents. By BENJAMIN HANBURY. Just ready, 18mo., 6*d.*

"They brought unto him also infants."—*Luke.*

The Vaudois; comprising Observations made during a Visit to the Valleys of Piedmont, in the Summer of 1844; together with Remarks Introductory and Interspersed, illustrative of the Origin, History, and Present Circumstances of that Interesting People. By Rev. E. HENDERSON, D.D. Post 8vo., cloth, with Map, 6*s.*

Home and its Resources; or, Glimpses of Nature. By the Author of the "Botanical Ladder." 18mo., cloth lettered, 2*s.*

The Crisis of Popular Education: its Statistics, and Relation to the Government. With Notice of the recent "Minutes in Council," &c. By JOHN HOPPUS, LL.D., F.R.S., Professor of Philosophy and Logic in University College, London. 8vo., 5*s.*

Schism; as opposed to the Unity of the Church, especially in the Present Times. A Prize Essay. By the same Author. Second Edition, post 8vo., boards, 5*s.*

"That they all may be one."

Agrippa; or, the Nominal Christian invited to Consideration and Decision. By Rev. JOHN JEFFERSON. Third Thousand, 18mo., cloth, 1*s.* 6*d.*

"A very powerful appeal to the consciences of those who are convinced of the truth of Christianity, but who still linger in a state of indecision. We augur much good from its extensive circulation."—*Evangelical Magazine.*

Truth and Duty: an Appeal to British Youth on the Present Claims of Christianity; being the Substance of Three Discourses to the Young, recently delivered in Abney Chapel, Stoke Newington. By the same Author. 18mo., cloth, 1*s.*

These Times: a Tract for the Young, showing the Claims which Religious Truth has upon their Attention and Zeal. By the same Author. 18mo., 4*d.*

On the Union of the Holy Spirit and the Church in the Conversion of the World. By Rev. T. W. JENKYN, D.D., F.G.S. Second Edition, fcap. 8vo., cloth lettered, 6*s.*

"We bear our willing testimony to the transcendent ability displayed in the work before us. It is profound in thought, close in argumentation, and rich in its illustrations."—*Methodist New-Connexion Magazine.*

The Extent of the Atonement, in its Relation to God and the Universe. By the same Author. Third Edition, post 8vo., cloth lettered, 7*s.*

"We think, with conclusive certainty, that this paramount and transcendent doctrine has never been presented in such a series of lucid disquisitions, and with a comprehension so adapted to the majesty of the subject, in any book published in the United Kingdom."—*Home Missionary Magazine.*

Hosted by Google

The Holy Art of Winning Souls to Christ, exemplified in the Life and Ministry of the late Rev. MORGAN JONES, of Trelech. 18mo., cloth, 1*s.* 3*d.*

Primitive Christianity illustrated; in Thirty Sermons, on various Doctrines, Ordinances, and Duties, taught and enjoined by our Lord Jesus Christ and his Apostles. By the late Rev. WM. JONES, M.A. Second Edition, 8vo., published at 12*s.*, reduced to 5*s.*

*** A few copies of the above invaluable volume remaining, early application should be made.

Autobiography of William Jones, M.A., Author of "The History of the Waldenses," "Biblical Cyclopædia," "Lectures on Ecclesiastical History," &c. Edited by his SON. 1 vol. 8vo., cloth lettered, 5*s.*

"To libraries, mechanics' institutes, and enterprising students, we would cordially recommend Jones' Autobiography, replete with interest, instruction, and encouragement."—*Manchester Times.*

Essay on Improper and Unhappy Marriages; or, a Guide in forming Connexions for Life. By Rev. W. JONES. 18mo., cloth, 1*s.* 6*d.*; sewed, 1*s.*

The Jubilee Services of the London Missionary Society; containing the Sermons of Rev. JAMES PARSONS, Rev. WILLIAM JAY, and Dr. RAFFLES, &c. &c. 1 vol. 8vo., cloth, 3*s.* 6*d.*

Aids to Memory; or, the Principal Facts and Dates of the Old Testament History, and of the subsequent History of the Jews, to the Period of the Incarnation, embodied in short Mnemonic Sentences, on the plan of Mrs. J. Slater's "Sententiæ Chronologicæ," with a Recommendatory Preface by Dr. Vaughan. By Mrs. JUKES. 18mo., cloth, 2*s.*

This day is published, in 1 vol. foolscap 8vo., cloth lettered, price 5*s.* 6*d.*,

Discourses on Holy Scripture, with Notes and Illustrations. By Rev. JOHN KELLY, Liverpool.

Church Catechism considered in its Character and Tendency; in a Series of Letters to a Clergyman. By Rev. JOHN KELLY. 1*s.*

The Jewish Exile; or, Religion exemplified in the Life and Character of Daniel. By Rev. JOHN KENNEDY, A.M., Stepney. 18mo., cloth, 2*s.*; silk, gilt edges, 3*s.*

Scotchman Abroad. By Rev. RICHARD KNILL. 6*d.*

The Footsteps of Messiah: a Review of Passages in the History of Jesus Christ. By Rev. W. LEASK, Author of "Our Era," "The Evidences of Grace," &c. Post 8vo., cloth, 7*s.*; morocco, elegant, 12*s.*

"The work now before us will not only sustain, but greatly add to the author's well-earned reputation. Such a book was a desideratum in Christian literature."—*Oxford Chronicle.*

The Evidences of Grace; or, the Christian Character delineated. By the same Author. 18mo., cloth lettered, price 1*s.* 6*d.*

Views from Calvary. By the same Author. 18mo., cloth, 2*s.* 6*d.*

"A most delightful book, and will be read with intense interest by hundreds of thousands of the members of our churches."

Philosophical Lectures. 18mo., sewed, 1*s.*; cloth, 2*s.*

Now ready, the Second Edition, in post 8vo., cloth lettered, price 3*s.* 6*d.*,

Christianity in Harmony with Man's Nature, Present and Progressive. By Rev. GEORGE LEGGE, LL.D., of Leicester.

Christian Privileges; or, a View of the peculiar Blessings appertaining to the Believer in Christ. By Rev. T. LEWIS, of Islington, Author of "Christian Characteristics," "Christian Duties," &c. &c. Foolscap 8vo., cloth, 3*s.* 6*d.*

Hosted by Google

The Christian Graces; or, the Fruits of the Spirit. By Rev. T. Lewis. Cloth, 8*d.*; silk, gilt edges, 1*s.* 6*d.*

Unfulfilled Prophecy respecting Eastern Nations, especially the Turks, the Russians, and the Jews. By Rev. A. Macleod. 12mo., cloth, 4*s.*

"To show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass."

Christian Consolation; or, the Unity of the Divine Procedure, a Source of Comfort to Afflicted Christians. By Rev. Edward Mannering. Second Edition, foolscap 8vo., cloth, 4*s.*

Christian Consistency; or, the Connexion between Experimental and Practical Religion. Designed for Young Christians. By the same Author. 18mo., cloth, 2*s.*

Christian Happiness considered, in its Relation to Man, Families, and Churches. Comprising "The Happy Man," "The Happy Family," "The Happy Church." By the same Author. Second Edition, 18mo., cloth, 2*s.*

A Pastor's Plea for the Unity of his People. By the same Author. 18mo., cloth, limp, 6*d.*

Madagascar and its Martyrs. A Book for the Young. With Five Engravings. Price 8*d.* sewed; cloth, 1*s.* 2*d.*

Recollections of a Tour. A Summer Ramble in Belgium, Germany, and Switzerland; including Sketches of the Minor States of Germany, the Fatherland of the Reformation, Modern Reform in Continental Churches, and the Condition of the Dispersed Jews. By Rev. J. W. Massie, D.D., M.R.I.A. Post 8vo., cloth, 9 *s.*

"It will henceforth be a choice companion to those who shall travel the same regions, and form a most interesting and valuable substitute for such travel to those who can spare neither the time nor the money."—*Christian Witness.*

The Evangelical Alliance; its Origin and Development. Containing Personal Notices of its Distinguished Friends in Europe and America. By the same Author. Post 8vo., cloth, 8*s.* 6*d.*

Liberty of Conscience illustrated, and the Social Relations sustained by Christians as Members of the Commonwealth considered. By the same Author. Post 8vo., sewed, 2*s.*; cloth, 3*s.*

"It is a book of great facts, great principles, pervaded by an earnest spirit of true religion, and the highest patriotism. One of the best signs of the times would be a demand for at least 10,000 copies of this work, which is issued at a price so trifling as to place it within the easy reach of individuals of the most straitened means."—*Christian Witness.*

Matilda's Legacy: a Collection of the Posthumous Poetical Productions of Matilda, Authoress of "Meditative Hours," &c. Also, a Brief Sketch of her Spiritual Career, and Extracts from her Diary and Correspondence. By J. M. 18mo., cloth, gilt edges, 3*s.*

Seasons of Peace. Poems on Subjects Sacred and Moral. By the same Author. Second Edition, 32mo., cloth, gilt edges, 2*s.*

China: its State and Prospects, with especial Reference to the Diffusion of the Gospel; containing Allusions to the Antiquity, Extent, Population, Civilization, Literature, Religion, and Manners of the Chinese; with Remarks on the Opium Trade. By Rev. W. H. Medhurst, D.D., Twenty Years a Missionary to the Chinese. Fifth Thousand, 8vo., cloth, 12*s.*

"To those who are interested in investigations on the state of China, this book will be a most valuable aid. It has advanced our knowledge of China immensely; and is one which every scholar and antiquarian should possess, if the purpose were merely that of knowing general history and customs."—*Churchman's Magazine.*

Hosted by Google

Exposition, with Practical Observations on the Book of Proverbs. By MATTHEW HENRY. 8vo., cloth, 2*s.* 6*d.*

The True Mode of Baptism investigated; being a Plain and Compendious Summary of Evidences in favour of Sprinkling, and against Immersion. By T. MILLS. Royal 18mo., cloth, 2*s.*

This day is published, 18mo., cloth, price 1*s.*,

Scripture Subjects, put into Simple Verse for the Young. By Rev. EDWARD MILLER, of Chiswick.

Memoir of the Rev. T. S. M'Kean, M.A., Missionary at Tahiti, who was killed by a Musket-shot, during an Engagement between the Natives and the French, on the 30th of June, 1844. By Rev. JOSEPH A. MILLER. With an Introduction by Rev. ARTHUR TIDMAN, D.D., Foreign Secretary of the London Missionary Society. Foolscap 8vo., cloth, 3*s.*

The profits arising from the sale of the work will be given to the Widow and Children of the Deceased.

The Elevation of the People, Instructional, Moral, and Social. By Rev. THOMAS MILNER, M.A., Author of "Astronomy and Scripture," &c. 8vo., cloth, 10*s.* 6*d.*

Astronomy and Scripture; or, Some Illustrations of that Science, and of the Solar, Lunar, Stellar, and Terrestrial Phenomena of Holy Writ. By the same Author. Fcap. 8vo., with many Illustrations, cloth, 7*s.*; morocco, elegant, 10*s.* 6*d.*

Missionary Labours and Scenes in Southern Africa. By the Rev. ROBERT MOFFAT, Twenty-three Years a Missionary in South Africa. 8vo., with Map, and beautifully illustrated, cloth, 12*s.*

——— **Cheap Edition.** Seventeenth Thousand. Royal 8vo., sewed, 3*s.*; cloth, 4*s.*

The Farewell Services of the Rev. Robert Moffat, at Edinburgh, Manchester, and London; including his last Sermon in England. Foolscap 8vo., cloth, 2*s.* 6*d.*

Counsels to a Newly-Wedded Pair; or, Friendly Suggestions to Husbands and Wives. A Companion for the Honey-Moon, and a Remembrancer for Life. With an Appendix, containing Extracts on the Subject of Marriage from the Writings of several Christian Divines. By Rev. JOHN MORISON, D.D. Nineteenth Thousand. 32mo., white silk, gilt edges, 2*s.* 6*d.*; cloth, 1*s.* 6*d.*

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

Counsels for the Communion Table; or, Persuasives to an immediate Observance of the Lord's Supper. Third Edition, silk, 2*s.* 6*d.*; cloth, 1*s.* 6*d.*

The Christian Pastor visiting his Flock, and the Flock reciprocating their Pastor's Care. Third Edition, silk, 2*s.* 6*d.*; boards, 1*s.* 6*d.*

Counsels to the Young. Fourth Edition, silk, gilt edges, 2*s.*; cloth, 1*s.* 3*d.*

Memoirs of the Life and Labours of the Rev. R. Morrison, D.D., Missionary to China. By his WIDOW. With Critical Notes by PROFESSOR KIDD. 2 vols. 8vo., cloth, 24*s.*

This day is published, 18mo., cloth, 2*s.*; gilt edges, 2*s.* 6*d.*,

Walks through Paradise: a Guide to the Young in the Study of the Primeval History of Man. By Rev. DAVID MOSES.

Hosted by Google

Memoirs of Mrs. Louisa Mundy, of the London Missionary Society's Mission at Chinsurah, Bengal; with Extracts from her Diary and Letters. By her HUSBAND. Foolscap 8vo., cloth, 4*s.*

"A deeply-interesting book, exhibiting the profoundest piety, and the most energetic and untiring devotion to the cause of Missions. The Memoir of this gifted and holy woman would not be too highly honoured if printed in letters of gold."—*Manchester Times.*

Modern Immersion directly opposed to Scriptural Baptism; in Reply to ALEXANDER CARSON, LL.D. By JOHN MUNRO, Minister of the Gospel, Knockando; Author of "Essays on God's Covenant and Church," &c. 8vo. sewed, 1*s.* 6*d.*

"So shall he *sprinkle* many nations."—*Isaiah.*
"Then will I *sprinkle* clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean."—*Ezekiel.*

The New Testament, translated from the Original Greek. The GOSPELS, by GEORGE CAMPBELL, D.D. The ACTS and REVELATION, by PHILIP DODDRIDGE, D.D. The EPISTLES, by JAMES MACKNIGHT, D.D. 18mo., cloth, 2*s.* 6*d.*

The Normal School: by ALGERNON WELLS. **The Model School:** by WILLIAM J. UNWIN, M.A. With Notes, Illustrations, Views, and Plans. Foolscap 8vo., cloth, 2*s.* 6*d.*

The Mental and Moral Dignity of Woman. By Rev. B. PARSONS. Second Edition, foolscap 8vo., 4*s.*

"Woman is the glory of man."—*Apostle Paul.*

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

Education the Birthright of every Human Being, and the only Scriptural Preparation for the Millennium; exhibiting the present imperfect State of Popular Instruction, and the Means of rendering it effectual for the Salvation of the Country and the World. 8vo., sewed, 3*s.*

Anti-Bacchus: an Essay on the Crimes, Diseases, and other Evils connected with the Use of Intoxicating Drinks. Fourteenth Thousand, 8vo., sewed, 2*s.*

"We conjure our readers to give this volume an attentive, candid perusal, from a decided conviction that, in proportion as its circulation is promoted, and its contents are impartially read, will be stayed one of the most dreadful evils that ever afflicted the human race."—*Methodist New-Connexion Magazine.*

The Wine Question settled, in accordance with the Inductions of Science and the Facts of History; in which particular Reference is made to the Character of ancient Drinks, especially the Wines of Scripture. 12mo., sewed, 1*s.* 6*d.*

Now ready, Second Edition, in 18mo., price 4*d.*,

A Manual explanatory of Congregational Principles. By Rev. GEORGE PAYNE, LL.D.

This day is published, 18mo., cloth, price 1*s.* 6*d.*,

Our Age and Our Country. Thoughts on the Past, the Present, and the Probable Future of England and the World, suggested by the Great Exhibition of the Arts and Industry of all Nations in 1851. By Rev. A. E. PEARCE.

The Constitution of Apostolical Churches; or, Outlines of Congregationalism; with Two Addresses suited to the Times. By Rev. J. S. PEARSALL. Second Edition, 12mo., cloth, 2*s.* 6*d.*

Apollos; or, the Scholar doing Homage to Divine Revelation. By the same Author. Price 6*d.*, or 5*s.* per dozen.

Faith and Order. Hints to Candidates for Church Fellowship. By the same Author. Price 3*d.*; gilt edges, 4*d.*

Hosted by Google

The Life, Times, and Missionary Enterprises in South Africa, and the British Isles, of the Rev. John Campbell; written chiefly by Himself. With Specimens of his Correspondence with the Countess of Leven, Sir Walter Scott, John Newton, Scott the Commentator, &c. &c. By Robert Philip. Post 8vo., with Portrait, cloth, 10*s.*

Life of the Rev. William Milne, D.D., Missionary to China. With Biographical Annals of Asiatic Missions from Primitive to Protestant Times; intended as a Guide to Missionary Spirit. By the same Author. Post 8vo., cloth, with Portraits of Dr. and Mrs Milne, 7*s.* 6*d.*

Jamaica; its Past and Present State. By Rev. James M. Phillippo, Twenty Years a Missionary in that Island. Third Thousand, post 8vo., cloth, with many Engravings, 8*s.* 6*d.*

"A volume of enchanting interest, which equals those of Williams and Moffat, presenting a most instructive and entertaining view of the state of society in Jamaica, and written in a spirit which inspires implicit confidence in the narrator."—*Patriot.*

The Missionary's Reward; or, the Success of the Gospel in the Pacific. By Geo. Pritchard, Esq., Her Britannic Majesty's Consul at the Navigators' Islands, South Seas. With an Introduction by the Rev. John Angell James. Second Thousand, beautifully illustrated, foolscap 8vo., cloth, 4*s.*

Procrastination; or, the Vicar's Daughter. A Tale. Third Edition, with Frontispiece, foolscap 8vo., elegantly bound, 3*s.* 6*d.*

"The *Third Edition* of a deeply-interesting volume, which should be read by every young lady throughout the kingdom."

"We are not surprised that the Third Edition of this work has been required. Such are its excellences, that its real character can only require to be known to obtain for it a very extensive circulation. It most felicitously describes the evils of a disposition to procrastinate, putting off from time to time the momentous duty of giving unreservedly the heart to God, and making an open avowal of discipleship to Christ."—*Wesleyan Association Magazine.*

Memoirs of the Life of Rev. John Williams, Missionary to Polynesia. Compiled from his Journals, Correspondence, and other Authentic Sources. By Rev. E. Prout. One handsome volume 8vo., cloth lettered, with Portrait, &c., 12*s.*

———— **Cheap Edition,** uniform with "Williams's Missionary Enterprises." Royal 8vo., sewed 3*s.*; cloth 4*s.*

Wild Flowers; or, Poetic Gleanings from Natural Objects, and Topics of Religious, Moral, and Philanthropic Interest. By Miss C. S. Pyer. Foolscap 8vo., cloth, 4*s.*

Songs of Freedom, for the School and Play-ground. Adapted to Popular Airs, and designed to inspire our Rising Youth with a Love of Civil and Religious Liberty. By the Author of "Wild Flowers." Square 16mo., sewed, 1*s.*

Masters and Committees of British, Congregational, and Ragged Schools, will find these Songs well fitted to aid the instruction they respectively impart.

Hebrew Grammar; containing a Copious and Systematic Development of the Etymology and Punctuation of that Language. By Rev. Samuel Ransom. 1 vol. 8vo., cloth, 5*s.*

Religious Life in the Established Church. In Twelve Letters, addressed to Pious Episcopalians. By a Friend. With a Prefatory Address to the Hon. and Rev. Baptist Noel, M.A. Foolscap 8vo., cloth, 2*s.* 6*d.*

This day is published, 8vo., sewed, price 1*s.*,

The Moral Conflict. A Sermon, preached before the London Missionary Society, at the Tabernacle, on Wednesday Evening, May 14th, 1851. By Rev. David Rees.

Hosted by Google

Lessons of Life and Death; a Memorial of SARAH BALL. By ELIZABETH RITCHIE. Second Edition, cloth, 2*s.*; silk, 3*s.*

"A beautiful narrative, to which we would earnestly invite the attention of our youthful readers."—*Christian Examiner.*

Lectures on the Book of Revelation. By Rev. GEORGE ROGERS. Vols. I. to IV., 12mo., cloth, 5*s.* each.

Mamma's Lessons on the History and Geography of Palestine, and other Places mentioned in the Bible, In Simple and Familiar Conversation. By ANNE MARIA SARGEANT. Square foolscap 8vo., cloth, with Map and Illustrations, 2*s.* 6*d.*

"A beautiful introduction to the Bible. No child can read it without being better prepared to understand the Scriptures. While the gifted writer does not forget that salvation is the great subject of the Bible, her book is full of facts, taken from history and Eastern customs, which explain many parts of God's Word. It is an excellent Sunday book for the young."—*Juvenile Missionary Magazine.*

A Word in Season; being a Faithful and Affectionate Address to Young People, on leaving Sabbath and other Schools connected with Places of Worship. By the same Author. 18mo., cloth, 1*s.*

This day is published, 8vo., cloth, price 12*s.*,

Sermons. By Rev. GEORGE SMITH, of Poplar.

The Protestant Reformation: a Lecture. By the same Author. The Second and Cheap Edition, 3*d.*

"One of the most vivid and telling essays on the great subject of which it treats, within so small a compass, in our language."—*Evangelical Magazine.*

The Tractarian Heresy; a Voice from Oxford. Tradition; or, the Rule of Religious Belief—The Doctrine of the Holy Catholic Church—The Christian Ministry; or, Apostolic Succession—The Efficacy of the Sacraments—Auricular Confession and Priestly Absolution—The Character and Tendency of Tractarianism. By Rev. J. SPENCE, M.A. Foolscap 8vo., cloth, 3*s.*

"It contains a calm, courteous, and masterly review, and, we think, an unanswerable refutation of all the dogmas of the Tractarian School."—*Oxford Chronicle.*

The Scriptural Argument against Apostolical Succession, in its Fabulous Genealogy, its Claim of Supremacy for Peter, its Graduated Scale of Ministerial Orders, and its Perversion of the Rite of Laying on of Hands. By Rev. THOMAS STRATTEN. Foolscap 8vo., cloth, 4*s.*

Just published, price 3*d.* each, or 2*s.* 6*d.* per dozen,

The Heavenly Supremacy; or, the Position and Duty, at the Present Crisis, of those who hold that Christ is the only Head of the Church. By Rev. THOMAS STRATTEN.

Letters on Missions. By Rev. WILLIAM SWAN, late Missionary in Siberia. With an Introductory Preface by W. ORME, late Foreign Secretary to the London Missionary Society. Second Edition, foolscap 8vo., cloth, 4*s.*

The Teacher's Farewell: a Parting Gift to Elder Scholars on their leaving the Sunday School. By the Author of "Robert's First Day at a Sunday School." With an Address, by HENRY ALTHANS, Esq. Third Edition, 18mo., cloth, gilt edges, 2*s.*

The Christian's Daily Treasury; being a Religious Exercise for Every Day in the Year. By the late Rev. E. TEMPLE. Third Edition, 12mo., cloth, 5*s.* 6*d.*

The Domestic Altar; or, Prayers for the Use of Families for One Month. By the same Author. New Edition, 12mo., cloth, 3*s.* 6*d.*

Hosted by Google

Sermons on various Subjects. Selected from his Manuscripts. By the late Rev. E. TEMPLE. With a Biographical Sketch of the Author, by his WIDOW. Royal 12mo., cloth, with Portrait, 6*s.*

The Soul: its Nature and Destinies. By Rev. P. THOMSON, A.M. Small 8vo., cloth, 4*s.* 6*d.*

"A more appropriate volume to put into the hands of inquiring young men we can scarcely imagine. It will fortify them against the scepticism and semi-scepticism of the age. As a compendium of all that is most important for them to know in reference to the spiritual part of their being, it is an invaluable production."—*Evangelical Magazine.*

The Three Kingdoms; with an ALLEGORY. A Book for the Young. Foolscap 8vo., cloth, 3*s.*

"Great principles are enunciated, in language at once beautiful and simple. The truths dealt out plainly are afterwards embodied in the form of an allegory; and the whole is put forth in a style adapted greatly to interest and instruct the young."—*Biblical Review.*

Memoirs of One Hundred Eminent Sunday-School Teachers. With two Essays:—1st. On the Importance of Sunday Schools. 2nd. On the Office of Sunday-School Teaching. By Rev. THOMAS TIMPSON. Second Thousand, 18mo., cloth, 2*s.* 6*d.*

"We are not surprised to find this exquisite compilation in the Second Thousand. Among all kindred publications, it stands forth by itself, peerless, arranged in attractions which adapt it to every class. We deem the book a perfect gem; and we predict for it a very extensive popularity."—*British Banner.*

The Youth's Key to the Bible; including the Evidences and History of the Sacred Books, and a DICTIONARY of every Important Word in the Old and New Testaments. Adapted for the Use of Families, and Schools, and Bible Classes. By the same Author. Sixth Thousand, 18mo., sewed, 1*s.*; cloth, 1*s.* 6*d.*

"Every family throughout the world should possess a copy of this invaluable little work."
"This book fulfils the large promise of its title. It is a solid mass of beaten gold."
—*Juvenile Missionary Magazine.*

Voyages and Travels Round the World. By the Rev. DANIEL TYERMAN, and GEORGE BENNET, Esq., deputed from the London Missionary Society to visit their various Stations in the South-Sea Islands, China, India, &c. Compiled from Original Documents, by JAMES MONTGOMERY, Esq. A new, revised, and Cheap Edition, with 26 Engravings, 8vo., sewed, 7*s.*; cloth, 8*s.*

Emmaus; or, Communion with the Saviour at Eventide. By Rev. JOHN WADDINGTON. Foolscap 8vo., cloth, 4*s.*

"This book has in it all the witching tranquillity and subdued effulgence of 'Eventide.' It is a clear stream of living water, pure and pellucid, gentle in its flow, and fringed along its whole course with verdure and freshness. The work is for the closet or the family: few can read it without pleasure; none, we should hope, without profit. The volume will be a treat to all who, combining intellectual taste with spirituality of mind, endeavour to exercise both in the study of Scriptural subjects. We wish it a wide circulation."—*Nonconformist.*

Hebrew Martyrs; or, the Triumph of Principle. By Rev. JOHN WADDINGTON. 18mo., cloth, 1*s.*

The Hallelujah; or, Devotional Psalmody. Part II. By Rev. J. J. WAITE, and H. J. GAUNTLETT, Mus. Doc. Super royal 8vo., limp cloth, 3*s.*; imperial 8vo., cloth boards, gilt edges, drawing-room copy, 5*s.*

——— The Vocal Score, 8vo., limp cloth, 2*s.*; and in separate Parts, 1*s.* each.

——— Part I. Revised, Re-arranged, and Enlarged. By Rev. J. J. WAITE, and H. J. GAUNTLETT, Mus. Doc. Imperial Octavo Edition, handsome cloth boards, gilt, price 5*s.*

N.B. The Original Edition, with Accompaniment, and also the Figured Edition, will be continued on sale.

Hosted by Google

Psalms and Hymns. By Isaac Watts, D.D.	Purple Roan.		Roan Embossed, Gilt Edges.		Morocco, Gilt Edges.		Morocco Elegant, Gilt Edges.	
	s.	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*
Diamond 48mo.	0	9	1	0	2	6	3	0
Demy 32mo.	1	6	2	0	3	6	4	0
Demy 18mo., large type	3	0	3	6	5	6	6	6
12mo., beautiful type for Old Persons ..	4	0	5	0	6	6	7	6

A Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South-Sea Islands; with Remarks upon the Natural History of the Islands, Origin, Languages, Traditions, and Usages of the Inhabitants. By Rev. John Williams, of the London Missionary Society. Beautifully illustrated. Forty-second Thousand, post 8vo., cloth, 8*s.* Cheap royal 8vo., sewed, 2*s.* 6*d.*; cloth, 3*s.* 6*d.*

The Basis of the Evangelical Alliance; a System of Theology without Sectarianism. In Eleven Discourses. By Rev. J. De Kewer Williams, E. A. Foolscap 8vo., cloth, 3*s.* 6*d.*

Mutual Christianity; or, the Duties of Christians One to Another. By the same Author. 18mo., sewed, 1*s.*; cloth, 1*s.* 6*d.*; silk, gilt edges, 2*s.*

Memoirs of the late Rev. W. Williams, of Wern. By Rev. W. Rees, of Liverpool. Translated from the Welsh, by James Rhys Jones, of Kilsby. With an Appendix by the Translator, containing Remarks on the Characteristics of Welsh Preaching. 12mo., cloth, with Portrait, 3*s.* 6*d.*

A Memoir of the Life and Character of the late Thomas Wilson, Esq., Treasurer of Highbury College. By his Son. Containing, also, copious Notices of Mr. Wilson, by Rev. Dr. Philip, of Cape Town, and Rev. J. A. James, of Birmingham. Second Edition, 8vo., cloth, with Portrait, 8*s.*

A Narrative of the Greek Mission; or, Sixteen Years in Malta and Greece. Including Tours in the Peloponnesus, in the Ægean and Ionian Isles, &c. By Rev. S. S. Wilson. Second Thousand, 8vo., cloth, illustrated, 12*s.*

Whitfield: the Centenary Services in Celebration of George Whitfield's Open-air Ministrations, held at the Tabernacle, Moorfields, May 21st, 1839. Fcap. 8vo., sewed, 1*s.* 6*d.*

The Spirit of God in the Conversion of the World. A Sermon, preached in the Tabernacle, Moorfields, before the Directors of the London Missionary Society, May 14th, 1845. By Rev. T. Archer, D.D. 4*d.*

The Divine Testimonies; their Wonderful Character. A Sermon, preached in Exeter Hall, June 1st, 1851. By the same Author. 2*d.*

Spiritual Declension. A Sermon, preached at Kingsland Chapel, October 11th, 1846. By Thomas Aveling, Minister of that place. Published by Request. 6*d.*

Christ and Christianity. A Lecture, delivered to the Working Classes, at the Request of the Committee of the Christian Instruction Society. By the same Author. 8*d.*

Great Sights. A Discourse, delivered in Kingsland Chapel, on the Sabbath preceding the Opening of the Great Exhibition. By the same Author. 6*d.*

The Ragged School Hymn-Book. Comprising One Hundred Hymns for use in Ragged Schools. 4*d.*

*** A large allowance made to Schools, on application direct to the Publisher.

The Convert from Popery. By Rev. John Adey. 3*d.*

Hosted by Google

The Magistrate and Nonconformity. A Sermon, occasioned by the Death of ROBERT TOWNLEY, Esq., one of Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the Cinque Ports. Preached in the Independent Chapel, Ramsgate, on Sunday Evening, April 15th, 1849. By Rev. HENRY J. BEVIS. 8vo., sewed, 6*d.*

The Pure in Heart seeing God. Two Sermons, preached at Chapel-street Chapel, Worthing, on Sunday, June 16th, 1847. By Rev. SAMUEL BREWER. Foolscap 8vo., 6*d.*; cloth, 1*s.*

CATECHISMS FOR SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

New Editions of the undermentioned Catechisms, supplied on the same terms they were sold at the Union Depôt:—

THE ASSEMBLY'S CATECHISM	7*s.*	4*d.*	per 100.
Ditto, with Proofs	12	0	„
WATTS' FIRST CATECHISM	5	6	„
——— SECOND ditto	5	6	„
——— Ditto ditto, with Proofs	12	0	„
——— HISTORICAL CATECHISM	7	4	„

*** The usual Discount from the above Prices.

The Protestant Reformation; a Tract for the People. By Rev. R. FERGUSON, LL.D. 12mo., 6*d.*

The Blessedness of Departed Spirits. A Discourse, preached on the occasion of the lamented Death of the late Mrs. ELIZABETH FRY. By the same Author. 8vo., sewed, 1*s.*

On the Advancement of Nations from the Barbarous to the Civilized State. By Rev. J. J. FREEMAN, Home Secretary to the London Missionary Society. 3*d.*

A Tribute of Affectionate Respect to the Memory of the FATHERS and FOUNDERS of the LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY. By Rev. JOHN ANGELL JAMES. 8vo., sewed, 1*s.*

The Christian Workman; a Memoir of WILLIAM ROBINSON, Hayton, Aspatria, Cumberland. With an Abstract of his Essay on the Sabbath, as one of the 1045 Working-men Prize Essayists. By W. KNIGHT, Pastor of the Church, Aspatria. 18mo., cloth, 1*s.*

Dialogue with a Romish Priest. By Rev. R. KNILL. 1*d.*, or 100 for 7*s.*

The Princes of Earth; or, Christ's Kingdom Perpetuated by Succession, and Advanced by Superiority. A Missionary Sermon. By Rev. SAMUEL MARTIN. 4*d.*

Deeds from Thoughts. By Rev. SAMUEL MARTIN, 3*d.*

The Morning Walk. 1*d.*, or 7*s.* per 100.

This interesting little book, of which Eight Thousand Copies have been sold at the price of Sixpence, is now reduced to One Penny, in the hope that great and lasting good may result from its still more extended circulation. It is particularly recommended to the notice of Christian Instruction Societies and of Sunday-School Teachers.

The Irish Harp on the Willows; or, Thoughts and Solicitudes respecting the Cause of Christ in Ireland. By Rev. J. D. SMITH, Kingstown, Ireland. Third Thousand, 4*d.*

A Voice from the West; or, the Claims and Condition of Connaught. By the same Author. Fourth Thousand, 8vo., 1*d.*

Is Mr. O'Connell in Purgatory? By the same Author. Thirty-third Thousand, price One Halfpenny; or 2*s.* 6*d.* per 100, for distribution among the Catholics of England and Ireland.

Hosted by Google

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
GRADUATE LIBRARY

DATE DUE

STATE ACCESS OFFICE

FEB 7 1998

Hosted by Google

NEW WORKS PUBLISHED BY JOHN SNOW,

The Scriptural Argument against Apostolical Succession, in its Fabulous Genealogy, its Claim of Supremacy for Peter, its Graduated Scale of Ministerial Orders, and its Perversion of the Rite of Laying on of Hands. By Rev. THOMAS STRATTEN. Foolscap 8vo., cloth, 4*s.*

Just published, price 3*d.* each, or 2*s.* 6*d.* per dozen,

The Heavenly Supremacy; or, the Position and Duty, at the Present Crisis, of those who hold that Christ is the only Head of the Church. By Rev. THOMAS STRATTEN.

Letters on Missions. By Rev. WILLIAM SWAN, late Missionary in Siberia. With an Introductory Preface by W. ORME, late Foreign Secretary to the London Missionary Society. Second Edition, foolscap 8vo., cloth, 4*s.*

The Teacher's Farewell: a Parting Gift to Elder Scholars on their leaving the Sunday School. By the Author of "Robert's First Day at a Sunday School." With an Address, by HENRY ALTHANS, Esq. Third Edition, 18mo., cloth, gilt edges, 2*s.*

The Christian's Daily Treasury; being a Religious Exercise for Every Day in the Year. By the late Rev. E. TEMPLE. Third Edition, 12mo., cloth, 5*s.* 6*d.*

The Domestic Altar; or, Prayers for the Use of Families for One Month. By the same Author. New Edition, 12mo., cloth, 3*s.* 6*d.*

Sermons on various Subjects. Selected from his Manuscripts. By the late Rev. E. TEMPLE. With a Biographical Sketch of the Author, by his WIDOW. Royal 12mo., cloth, with Portrait, 6*s.*

e Soul: its Nature and Destinies. By Rev. P. THOMSON, A.M. ...o., cloth, 4*s.* 6*d.*

...ppropriate volume to put into the hands of inquiring young men we can ... It will fortify them against the scepticism and semi-scepticism of the ...ndium of all that is most important for them to know in reference to the ...eir being, it is an invaluable production."—*Evangelical Magazine.*

...ngdoms; with an ALLEGORY. A Book for the Young. ...vo., cloth, 3*s.*

...eat principles are enunciated, in language at once beautiful and simple. The truths ... out plainly are afterwards embodied in the form of an allegory; and the whole is put ...rth in a style adapted greatly to interest and instruct the young."—*Biblical Review.*

...moirs of One Hundred Eminent Sunday-School Teachers. With two Essays:—1st. On the Importance of Sunday Schools. 2nd. On the Office of Sunday-School Teaching. By Rev. THOMAS TIMPSON. Second Thousand, 18mo., cloth, 2*s.* 6*d.*

"We are not surprised to find this exquisite compilation in the Second Thousand. Among all kindred publications, it stands forth by itself, peerless, arranged in attractions which adapt it to every class. We deem the book a perfect gem; and we predict for it a very extensive popularity."—*British Banner.*

e Youth's Key to the Bible; including the Evidences and History of the Sacred Books, and a DICTIONARY of every Important Word in the Old and New Testaments. Adapted for the Use of Families, and Schools, and Bible Classes. By the same Author. Sixth Thousand, 18mo., sewed, 1*s.*; cloth, 1*s.* 6*d.*

"Every family throughout the world should possess a copy of this invaluable little work."

"This book fulfils the large promise of its title. It is a solid mass of beaten gold."—*Juvenile Missionary Magazine.*

Voyages and Travels Round the World. By the Rev. DANIEL TYERMAN, and GEORGE BENNET, Esq., deputed from the London Missionary Society to visit their various Stations in the South-Sea Islands, China, India, &c. Compiled from Original Documents, by JAMES MONTGOMERY, Esq. A new, revised, and Cheap Edition, with 26 Engravings, 8vo., sewed, 7*s.*; cloth, 8*s.*

Hosted by Google

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
3 9015 01373 8037

Emmaus; or, Communion with the Saviour at Eventide. By Rev. JOHN WADDINGTON. Foolscap 8vo., cloth, 4*s*.

"This book has in it all the witching tranquillity and subdued effulgence of 'Eventide.' It is a clear stream of living water, pure and pellucid, gentle in its flow, and fringed along its whole course with verdure and freshness. The work is for the closet or the family: few can read it without pleasure; none, we should hope, without profit. The volume will be a treat to all who, combining intellectual taste with spirituality of mind, endeavour to exercise both in the study of Scriptural subjects. We wish it a wide circulation."—*Nonconformist*.

Hebrew Martyrs; or, the Triumph of Principle. By Rev. JOHN WADDINGTON. 18mo., cloth, 1*s*.

The Hallelujah; or, Devotional Psalmody. Part II. By Rev. J. J. WAITE, and H. J. GAUNTLETT, Mus. Doc. Super royal 8vo., limp cloth, 3*s*.; imperial 8vo., cloth boards, gilt edges, drawing-room copy, 5*s*.

——————— The Vocal Score, 8vo., limp cloth, 2*s*.; and in separate Parts, 1*s*. each.

——————— Part I. Revised, Re-arranged, and Enlarged. By Rev. J. J. WAITE, and H. J. GAUNTLETT, Mus. Doc. Imperial Octavo Edition, handsome cloth boards, gilt, price 5*s*.

N.B. The Original Edition, with Accompaniment, and also the Figured Edition, will be continued on sale.

A Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South-Sea Islands; with Remarks upon the Natural History of the Islands, Origin, Languages, Traditions, and Usages of the Inhabitants. By Rev. JOHN WILLIAMS, of the London Missionary Society. Beautifully illustrated. Forty-second Thousand, post 8vo., cloth, 8*s*. Cheap royal 8vo., sewed, 2*s*. 6*d*.; cloth, 3*s*. 6*d*.

The Basis of the Evangelical Alliance; a System of Theology without Sectarianism. In Eleven Discourses. By Rev. J. DE KEWER WILLIAMS, E.A. Foolscap 8vo., cloth, 3*s*. 6*d*.

A Memoir of the Life and Character of the late Thomas Wilson, Esq., Treasurer of Highbury College. By his Son. Containing, also, copious Notices of Mr. Wilson, by Rev. Dr. PHILIP, of Cape Town, and Rev. J. A. JAMES, of Birmingham. Second Edition, 8vo., cloth, with Portrait, 5*s*.

A Narrative of the Greek Mission; or, Sixteen Years in Malta and Greece. Including Tours in the Peloponnesus, in the Ægean and Ionian Isles, &c. By Rev. S. S. WILSON. Second Thousand, 8vo., cloth, illustrated, 12*s*.

The Spirit of God in the Conversion of the World. A Sermon, preached in the Tabernacle, Moorfields, before the Directors of the London Missionary Society, May 14th, 1845. By Rev. T. ARCHER, D.D. 4*d*.

The Divine Testimonies; their Wonderful Character. A Sermon, preached in Exeter Hall, June 1st, 1851. By the same Author. 2*d*.

Spiritual Declension. A Sermon, preached at Kingsland Chapel, October 11th, 1846. By THOMAS AVELING, Minister of that place. Published by Request. 6*d*.

Christ and Christianity. A Lecture, delivered to the Working Classes, at the Request of the Committee of the Christian Instruction Society. By the same Author. 3*d*.

Great Sights. A Discourse, delivered in Kingsland Chapel, on the Sabbath preceding the Opening of the Great Exhibition. By the same Author. 6*d*.

The Convert from Popery. By Rev. JOHN ADEY. 3*d*.

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google